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VERY SUCCESSFUL!

BY

LADY BULWER LYTTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

“There is a twofold fortune wherewith we are to enter the lists; good and ill, prosperetie and aduersetie; these are the two combats, the two dangerous times, wherein it behoveth us to stand upon our guard and to gather our wits about us: for they are the two schooles, essayes, and touch-stones of the spirit of man.”—

Of Wisd.me, the second booke,—by PETER CHARRON, A.D. 1600.

“Perieramus nisi perissemus.”

“Not from the chance of Fortune’s wheel,
Nor from the dust—affliction springs;
The troubles that believers feel
Are but God’s blessings in disguise;
And like Ezekiel’s visioned rings,*
The wheels of Providence have *eyes*.—

JOSEPH SNOW’S “Churchyard Thoughts.”

*Ezek. i. 18.



LONDON:—WHITTAKER & Co., AVE MARIA LANE.

TAUNTON:—FREDERICK R. CLARKE,
AT THE “CAXTON’S HEAD.”

1856.

[THE AUTHOR RESERVES THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION.]



CHAPTER I.

The sick Child.—The fading Flower.

THE broad lands around Baron's Court were looking their loveliest, under the rich glow of a September sun, but the shutters of two of the upper windows of the house were closed in two different gables, and silence reigned throughout it—that cold, rigid silence, which waits on death rather than on quiet and repose; and truly sorrow *was* there dreading, because expecting, the arrival of death. Poor little Charley had the scarlet fever, and though Mrs. Lewyn (the old lady who

had been at Mr. Lethbridge's meeting) had kindly offered to take May and Linda, nothing could induce them to leave their little brother. The other invalid was Miss Kempenfelt, who had taken to her bed from sheer fright, and was enacting her favorite *rôle* of the "*Malade Imaginaire*;" and, like all such, was giving more trouble than a whole hospital of wounded soldiers. Mrs. Penrhyn did her uttermost, not only to keep the two sisters as much as possible out of the poor little sufferer's room, but, when they were not in the fresh air, to keep them employed in ministering to Miss Charity's ever-growing and ever-varying wants, upon a sort of principle of counter-irritation; and the plan succeeded admirably, as it diverted at least Linda's violent grief for her brother's illness to frequent and violent indignation against her aunt's unreasonableness. Twice a day only Mrs. Penrhyn allowed the girls to see their brother, and then she made them wear respirators, and slip over their dress a loose wrapper that was well sprinkled with chloride of lime. As she was going up the back-stairs to the school room, to take May and Linda to Charley, she found Linda crying violently in the landing.

"What is the matter, dear?" said she, drawing her kindly towards her.

"Aunt Charity," sobbed she, "has been scolding me because the guard was not on her fire, and a

great coal fell out into the fender and disturbed her, as if I could help *that*."

"Well, but had she told you to have the guard put on?"

"Why, yes she did, and I *told* Anne to put it on."

"You should have put it on yourself, Linda, or *seen* that Anne did so. It is a very great fault in any one, but more especially in children and servants, not to do *exactly what* they are told, and do it *when* they are told; it is this transferring orders from one to another, telling John to tell Tom to tell Harry to tell James, that causes all the neglect, mismanagement, and confusion in the world. The Spaniards have a true proverb:—'If you want a thing *go for it*; if you don't, send;' and if you want a thing *to be done*, see that it is done, and don't trust to any one else, who may follow your example and roll on the order still farther till it is no where to be found, like a shuttlecock sent over the wall."

"Ah! you always take part with Aunt Charity," re-sobbed Linda.

"Only for your sake; for believe me, my dear child, you cannot too soon give yourself the *habit* of executing *scrupulously* and *conscientiously* whatever you undertake to do for others for; though a thing may appear the most puerile trifle to *you*, it may be of the most *vital importance* to *them*. For

instance, suppose your Aunt Charity's *life* had depended upon her getting a quiet and uninterrupted sleep after an opiate?"

"Well, if it had," broke in Linda, "it would not have been my fault that a coal had fallen out of the fire and made a noise. *I* could not help *that*."

"I think you might, if, instead of letting your own temper be chafed at the peevishness and irritation which is almost inseparable from illness, you would rather compassionate the invalid for this irritability, which is not one of the least of their sufferings, and study how you could obviate giving them any cause for it."

"Surely, Mrs. Pemble, if I studied till doomsday I could not prevent cinders falling into the grate and making a noise."

"I think you might even do *that* with a little invention; but *rien sans peine*, you know. Now if the next time you go into your aunt's room, you will take a piece of tape and measure first the size of the grate within the fender, and then the breadth and depth of the opening that goes under the grate, we will get a tin made to fit over the whole—that is, to slide in, under the grate; and by having this tin filled, or rather half, filled every morning with damp sawdust or sand, the cinders falling, will, or can, make no noise; and, moreover, the noise so worrying to an invalid, of having the grate

cleaned, and the cinders raked up every morning, will be also avoided; as they can all be carried away, ready collected in this tin, which when they are thrown out, is replenished with fresh wet sand or sawdust, and put back again."

"I do believe," said Linda, throwing her arms round Mrs. Penrhyn's neck, "that if one wanted one of the stars out of the sky, you would invent something by which one might get it."

"I fear, my little Linda, *that* is rather beyond me; so I must say to you, as Lord Albemarle did to his lady-love, '*don't* wish for a star, for I *cannot* give it to you.'"

"Talking of stars, do you know, Mr. Lethbridge lent me Humbolt's *Kosmos*; and, though I thought I should find it so dry, I'm so much interested in it."

"So *what*, Linda?"

"I forget, I mean interested; but Miss Prosser used always to say interested with a great stress on the *res*, as if it had two ss's."

"No doubt; and Miss Prosser, you tell me, used to say *kewcumber*; and I mean *to*, or I don't *mean to*; and talk of *expecting* that a thing *had* been; and called going in a carriage *riding*. But Miss Prosser had kept a school in a provincial town where people do speak in that way, as indeed cabmen, maid-servants, and a certain race of authors do in London; but as you are a gentlewoman

Linda, and therefore likely to associate with ladies and gentlemen, you should try and break yourself of those intense vulgarisms, as nothing annoys your grand-papa so much."

"I will, dear; and I am better than *I was*—now am I not?"

"Why, yes; but *best* is beyond better, and that is what I want you to be in all things."

"I don't think any one but you and grand-papa can be that. I'm sure Aunt Charity never will. And what do you think she fancies now? Why, that she has got the quinsy; but I told her it was only the *whimsey*."

"That was very pert of you," laughed Mrs. Pemble. "However have the goodness to recollect that the *whimsey* is *the* most troublesome and *exigeante* of all complaints; so *mind* that you attend to it properly."

"May has gone to Charley's room; may I not go too, now?"

"I was just going for you; but May should not have gone by herself. I hope she did not forget the chloride of lime and the respirator."

"I think she did; indeed, I am almost sure she went just as she was."

"Naughty child; one would really think she did it on purpose, and was trying to catch the infection."

"I almost think she is, for latterly she seems so

pale, so dull, nothing seems to amuse her ; and she never sits with me as she used to do. Indeed, Mrs. Pemble, I don't think May is well."

"I have long feared that she was not ; still she persists in saying that there is nothing the matter with her."

Upon softly opening the nursery door they saw Mrs. Andrews, the nurse, standing at one side of poor little Charley's bed, and May kneeling at the other, with her cheek upon the pillow close to the poor little sufferer's face, who was rolling about his head, from which all the golden curls had been cut, flinging about his arms, and rambling in the wildest manner. Mrs. Penrhyn threw up her hands and shook her head deprecatingly at May, who then rose up slowly, and covered her eyes (which seemed more burning than his) in her handkerchief."

"Poor little dear ! Dr. Marsh thinks him better, ma'am," said Mrs. Andrews in a low voice, "though he do run on so ;" and here the child repeated the burden of his ravings—

"Some say the owl is a baker's daughter ; but that's not true, she's Swiftpaws' daughter, and Fluff's son. And May and Linda took all the kingcups out of the meadow. But I'm to have wings—Mrs. Pemble said I should—to go to the top of Snowdon and see how the sun makes the flowers, and I'm to ride back on grand-papa's charger. And

if I'm good I'm to sit at church with all the stars— Mr. Lethbridge said so. Won't that be grand? And Fluff and Swiftpaws are to stay till I come back with Tamar and Taffy Lloyd. And Aunt Charity is to marry Mr. Twitcher, and then the owl will be the baker's daughter. But May and Linda sha'n't give her even a single cowslip, because she would not give the poor old woman any bread; and that's what comes of being a baker's daughter! Owl! owl! don't howl, or your head will swell as big as the bread put into the oven, when the fairy cheated the baker's daughter."

"Poor little fellow!" said May; "that explanation you gave us some time ago about Ophelia's saying 'the owl's a baker's daughter' is running in his head. Mrs. Andrews thought he had been frightened by an owl, he has gone on so all night about it."

"Mrs. Penrhyn removed the linen from his temples, which were now burning hot again, and re-steeped it in iced-water and chloride of lime, and for a moment that seemed to ease him, and he raved less; and as she felt his little, hot, galloping pulse, she said to Mrs. Andrews, "Have the goodness to go down and ask for a cupfull of fresh yeast, and bring it here with a dessert-spoon. I'll take it upon myself to give it to him, it *can* do no harm, and I have seen it work such miracles in all cases of fever that I will try it."

Mrs. Andrews soon returned with the yeast, and Mrs. Penrhyn gave the child a dessert-spoonful, after which she took his little burning hand in hers and continued to feel his pulse. Gradually his ravings became fewer and fainter, his eyelids began to droop, and in about ten minutes he had dropped into a profound sleep.

"It is probable," said Mrs. Pemble to the nurse, as she gently laid down the little hand she had been holding, "that he may sleep for some hours; it is also possible, that on waking, he may feel hungry, and ask for something to eat. If so, be sure and give it to him. He may have a bit of chicken and some jelly, or blanc-mange, or anything of that kind that he fancies; only first be sure and give him another dessert-spoonfull of yeast, and another again at bed-time; and if I should not happen to be here when he wakes, have the goodness to send for me."

And so saying she beckoned to the two girls to follow her out of the room, taking care to sprinkle it plentifully with chloride of lime as she went. They had no sooner reached the school-room than Linda flung herself on the sofa, and burst into a passion of tears, sobbing out she was *now* quite sure that Charley would die, for when Nanny Markham's child was ill last year Tamar Lloyd had said whenever a sick child talked either of

angels or wings, they would surely die, and Johnny Markham *had died*.

“For shame, Linda! instead of putting your trust in GOD’s mercy; and, even if it should be as you fear, submitting to His will, you go pinning your faith and making yourself wretched on the strength of a parcel of old women’s fables. If it *should* be GOD’s will to take your poor little brother, though I hope and trust it will be His great mercy not to do so, you should seek your consolation in the remembrance of the great favor GOD shews to some privileged souls, in recalling them back to heaven, while they are still, from the fewness of their years, innocent and untainted with any of this world’s pollution; and so check your own selfish regrets in the recollection that *you* alone suffer—that to him all must be gain, glory, and endless joy. Still, to grieve to a certain extent, is not only allowable, but commendable, as you would be both unnatural and unfeeling if you did not do so. Why, even were your sister to go on a visit, where *she* would be very happy, you would feel lonely and desolate without her, and would of course grieve for the loss of her presence and companionship; but if, notwithstanding *her* great augmentation of happiness and welfare, you would *not* be consoled for her absence, why *then* your sorrow would degenerate into selfishness, and would

cease to deserve sympathy. Bring me that book bound in russia off the third shelf, and I will read you an admirable letter on this very subject, written by Benjamin Franklin, on the death of his brother John, addressed to his brother's daughter-in-law." "Ah, here it is!" added Mrs. Penrhyn, turning over the leaves :

‘Dear Child,

‘I condole with you. We have lost a most dear and valuable relation ; but it is the will of God that these mortal bodies should be laid aside when the soul is to enter into real life ; ’tis rather an embryo state, a preparation for living. A man is not completely born, till he be dead. Why then should we grieve that a new child be born among the immortals—a new member added to their happy society. We are but spirits. That bodies should be lent us while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or doing good to our fellow-creatures, is a kind, benevolent act of GOD. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid, they become an incumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given ; it is equally kind and benevolent, that a way is provided by which we can get rid of them. Death is that way. We ourselves prudently choose a partial death ; in some cases a mangled, painful limb, which cannot be restored, we willingly cut off.

He who plucks out a tooth parts with it freely, since the pain goes with it; and he that quits the whole body, parts at once with all its pains, and possibilities of pains and diseases it was liable to, or capable of making him suffer.

“Our friend and we are invited abroad on a party of pleasure that is to last for ever. His carriage was first ready, and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together. And why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him.

‘Adieu, B. F.’”

“Well, that *is* a good letter,” said Linda, drying her eyes, and throwing her arms about Mrs. Penrhyn’s neck; and I will try and mind what you and it say. “Is there any more about that good old Dr. Franklin?”

“Yes, here is his epitaph, written by himself when he was a printer; and it is quite in the same true and wise spirit as the letter I have just read you:”

‘The Body
of

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER

(Like the cover of an old book,
Its contents torn out
And stript of its lettering and gilding,)
Lies food for worms:
Yet the work itself shall not be lost,

For it will (as he believed) appear once more,

In a new

And more beautiful edition,

Corrected, and amended,

BY

THE AUTHOR.”’

“And now, like a good, kind, little girl as you are, *quoique tant soit peu étourdie*, go and see how your aunt Charity is; and don’t forget to take the measure of her grate.”

“Oh, yes! and I must see about melting the butter for her boiled fish dinner; for yesterday she was so angry, as she declares they had put flour in it.”

“Well, I don’t wonder at her being angry, for *that is* an abomination; and besides, you know that when she is ill she likes you or May always to melt it for her in her own little silver saucepan; therefore you should take care to do it, and not trust to servants, who seldom now-a-days will give either the time or the attention to doing even the most trifling things as they ought to be done.”

“Ah! but do you know, even with me the butter *will sometimes* either turn to oil, or is too thin?”

“All your own fault, as it could *not possibly do* so if you melted it in the way I shewed you how to do it; that is, to put a tablespoon—not *quite* full of cold water—and the moment it begins to

heat take it *off* the fire and turn the saucepan *always one way from you*, and so on, till it is *quite* melted; and then, but not till then, let it boil up *once*, which makes it as thick as *very* thick cream; but if you turn it either *over* the fire *or towards you*, it will oil it, or if you put more than the tablespoonful of water it will make it thin and watery, and cause the butter and water to separate, and render it so nasty looking as to be uneatable. For my part, I always judge of the mistress of a house, be she rich or poor—a great lady or a very humble one—by the coffee, melted butter, bread, oyster, celery, and lobster sauce, that come to her table, and the way she makes tea. When all these are bad, uneatable, and undrinkable, I conclude that she is not fit to be the mistress of a house, and regret that she should be.”

When Linda left the room, May sat upon a stool at Mrs. Penrhyn’s feet, and laid her head on her lap.

“My dearest love,” said the latter, “you really must not be so imprudent as to go into Charley’s room without taking any precautions, and still less go hanging over his pillow and breathing that infectious air. Promise me that you will not do so again?”

“What does it matter, dear? I feel sure Charley will recover, and be always with you; and—and—I wish to see him poor little fellow, while yet I can.”

“My darling! what *do* you mean?” said Mrs. Penrhyn, as the big tears over-flowed her eyes; and she pushed back the rich braids of May’s bright silken hair and kissed her forehead.

“Now, don’t cry, dear; you know you were telling Linda the truth just now, of how much better off those whom GOD takes are, than those whom He leaves.”

“May, you will break my heart! *Do* see Dr. Marsh. I have perceived for some time that you are *not* well; and yet you persist in saying that you are.”

“Because, indeed, dear, I am not ill in body; I have no pain, except a headache sometimes; but I feel that I shall soon be, and that I *want* to be in heaven.”

“Ah!” cried Mrs. Penrhyn, clasping her hands, as the tears now gushed in torrents from her eyes, “it may well be said that Fortune *never* comes with both hands full. I am no sooner rejoicing with an overflowing heart of gratitude to GOD at my dear boy’s miraculously-preserved life, at his increasing honors and friends—dear old Mr. Phippen and that good Lord Pendarvis having written me word of the sword and the company his countrymen and countrywomen have sent him out—but I see you perishing before my eyes, May; and so does your poor dear grandfather, whose heart it is break-

ing; and you talk of leaving us for ever—and wishing to do so—cruel, cruel May !”

“ You know, dear,” said the latter, looking up in her face, with a sort of shadowy, unearthly smile, “ that nothing fades so *soon* as May : but luckily, a thousand better and brighter things come after it, when the meadows are burnished with poor Charley’s favorite kingcups, and the woods and fields are literally clad ‘ in a vesture, wrought about with divers colors.’ But I want you to promise me——”

“ Anything,—everything,—darling,” wept Mrs. Penrhyn, “ for I am sure there is nothing you could ask, that I would not and ought not to grant.”

“ Well, then, you *will* let your son marry that beautiful, that kind, that generous lady Florinda Andover, who has taken such care of and nursed him so well,—will you not? And you won’t mind her nasty family, however disagreeable they may be. Now promise me that you will not?” And as she spoke, the dark pupils of her large starry eyes seemed to dilate; and the light within shone out through her transparent cheek in a crimson tint, like the reflection of a lamp seen through an alabaster vase.

Mary Penrhyn looked at her for a moment with an inquiring, bewildered look, and then said—

“I have told Harcourt that he should have no opposition from *me*. Lady Florinda herself is a most charming and superior person, whom I could only feel proud to call daughter, and happy to see his wife. If *he* likes to encounter the low pride of that family, and to entail upon his amiable and devoted wife the thousand humiliations and heart-burnings her marriage with him will subject her to from them, that is *his* affair, and not mine. Whatever *my* feelings towards, or my prejudices against them may be, I could never answer it to myself to set *either* up as a barrier between happiness and my own child. It is only where there is sin that duty has a right to put a veto against what is but the impostor sorrow, tricked out in the alluring semblance of happiness; otherwise, I hold that no one human being, whether parent or not, has a right to mar or thwart the happiness of another. Indeed, the greatest objection to me in this marriage, is their relationship, distant as it is; as there are a thousand reasons to make marriages between cousins any thing but desirable. But I assure you, dearest child, I never act with reference, much less with deference, to the world’s opinion; persuaded as I am, and as I have always endeavoured to convince you and Linda, that our *motives* alone rise upwards to GOD’s judgment-seat, while our actions, and men’s opinion of them, eventually sink either in themselves or their consequences.”

“Now I am happy,” said May, kissing the hand that was caressing her cheek.

“And yet,” urged Mrs. Penrhyn mournfully, “you will not make Sir Gregory and me happy by consulting Dr. Marsh.”

The gentle girl looked tenderly and earnestly up into the speaker’s face, as she took both her hands in her own, and for all answer merely repeated—

“Where is thy balm O Gilead? where
The great physician may I see?
Death heard the suffering christian’s prayer,
And said, ‘Behold them *both* in me.’”

“May!” exclaimed Mrs. Penrhyn, looking so intently into the uttermost depths of her eyes as that it was quite impossible that any feeling passing through her heart at that moment could do so without its shadow falling upon them; “May, forgive the question I am going to ask you; but answer me—oh! but *truly*—as if you were upon oath—do you love, do you?”

Here the young girl trembled violently; her lips became livid, and a death-like faintness appeared to be rapidly stealing over her.

“Do you,” continued Mrs. Penrhyn, “love Mr. Lethbridge; and does he love you?”

“What an idea!” said May, drawing a long breath, while a smile passed over her beautiful face, that brought all the rosy blood back in a mantling tide to her cheeks and lips. “I can answer,” said

she, "for not loving him beyond a very sincere liking, which every one, who knows him, I think, must feel for him. And *padre Maria!*" added she, more playfully than she had spoken for months, "I think I can also answer for *his* not loving *me*, inasmuch as that he never told me so even in Hebrew, which you know I should have had to interpret backwards into hatred; and I hope and trust he don't *hate* me, however stupid I may be."

Mrs. Penrhyn kissed her forehead. For a moment this unequivocal denial and refutation of her suspicions as to May's having an attachment to Mr. Lethbridge seemed a great relief to her; but the next a clouded expression of care and perplexity seemed to pass over her face, and again kissing May she rose up and went to her own room, for she had need to be alone.

That night Charley's fever left him, for the yeast had produced its usual miraculous effect, so that, for the time being at least, there was a sorrow the less at Baron's Court.

CHAPTER II.

Again !



NCE more the walls of Baron's Court rang with little Charley's merry laugh ; he was again up and about, and his pretty hair, with its "innocent wave," was beginning to grow as luxuriantly as ever. And if kindness *could* spoil—which good dispositions it never can—he ran a greater risk than ever of being spoiled, as, from his grandfather down to the herdsman, there was not a soul about the place thought they could ever make enough of him since he had been snatched, as it were, from the jaws of death ; and even Miss Charity herself seemed to have put by her nerves on the same shelf with Mr. Twitcher's book, and to cease to think her little grand-nephew troublesome.

October, which is such a lovely month in late seasons and well-wooded countries, was now, though half gone, robed in all the varied beauty of its kaleidoscope-tinted foliage, and gilded into additional brightness by the vivid rays of an autumnal sun.

The two sisters with their little brother had been invited to spend the day at Pen-y-Coed, the house of that kind old lady, Mrs. Lewyn; and as Madame Duval, in "Evelina," never went "*nowhere* without Monsieur Du Bois,"—in like manner, Charley never went any where without his attendant satellites, Swiftpaws and Fluff; and certainly, the former, with his brilliant eyes, silver paws, and red golden ears, was no inapt personation of "Bright Canis;" but as he was again bridled with blue ribbons and a splendid blue velvet saddle-cloth, which Linda had made for him, and embroidered in gold, with a monogram in each corner of C. S. F. being Charley's, Swiftpaws' and Fluff's initials, Charley on the present occasion insisted that Fluff should ride to Pen-y-Coed, in consideration of the well known feline objection to wet feet; and had that incomparable personage been the *Shah* of Persia, instead of only a Persian cat, he could not have looked more grandly grave or more overpowered with a sense of his own dignity than did the illustrious Fluff, when mounted on his usual steed, who by no means relished the slow and

stately pace which this honor condemned *him* to. But so it is, in this “best of all possible worlds,” that those who are ridden *will* champ the bit, and are seldom so content with the dispensations of destiny as those who, like Fluff, are not only seated on velvet, but being kept out of its mire and misery, can, with calm philosophic eye and well bred equanimity, dominate and contemplate the world from their easy and dignified position.

“Why, Charley,” said May, as he gathered up the blue ribbon bridle in his hands, as the procession was about to start; “I think as we go along the road the people will take you for one of those travelling show-boys, and give you half-pence for your exhibition.”

This idea so tickled Charley’s fancy that he improved on it, and, dancing with delight and laughing so loud that Fluff looked perfectly scandalized, he said—“And if they don’t give me any of their own accord, I’ll ask them for some for my poor dog and cat, who you see Ma’am, or Sir, are *quite starved*; and we have a long—long—way to go to day; so *pray* give me a half-penny to get one bone for Swiftpaws, and a saucer of milk for Fluff,” added he, in a lachrymose whine, putting his head on one side, which got him so kissed by his sisters, that he was obliged to issue a protest, and say—

“Don’t, *children*, you’ll kiss me to rags.”

At length the kissing was over, the cat settled,

and the procession moved on, accompanied by Grant, as Mrs. Penrhyn, having many letters to write, remained at home, but promised to go for them in the evening; having well secured May's boa, and seen that she had her clogs on.

"And now, Charley," said she, calling after him as a parting admonition, "mind you don't even *touch*, much less pull about, any of Mrs. Lewyn's things, particularly if she is *not* in the room you are shown into. If you *will* be curious, you can satisfy your curiosity with your eyes; they can neither break nor disarrange any thing; and, setting aside the vulgarity of fiddling, there is something dishonorable in prying into peoples things when they are not present, and no one likes (independently of the danger of breaking them) to have their knick-knacks unsettled, or finger marks left on the bindings of their books—a legacy which your *fiddlers* invariably bequeath them."

"But you will come early to Mrs. Lewyn's, dear; will you not?" asked May.

"Oh yes, I'll come before tea; and promise me, May, that you will *not* walk about the grounds when you get to Pen-y-Coed, for the walk there is quite enough for you, and on no account must you walk home."

"Ah, but do you know when I was in the library this morning with grand-papa, and he was settling some accounts with Price, I heard Price tell him

that poor Titus was ill ; and you know he has but one pair of carriage-horses now."

" Well, but my love, Surrey is not ill ; and the covered car can go for you, or a fly can be got from Mold. But on no account must you walk home."

And with another final and parting kiss, in which Swiftpaws shared, (as Charley insisted that Mrs. Penrhyn should kiss the two nutmegs, as he called the two spots on the dog's head), they at length departed, Mrs. Penrhyn standing at the hall-door looking after them till they were out of sight ; and then, with a sigh, she re-entered the house and went up-stairs to the school-room, where, as a preliminary to writing her own letters, she began re-reading Harcourt's. And, as the usual sequel of so doing, her face was soon bathed in tears, and, leaning her elbows on the table, she covered her face with her hands. While still giving way to this reverie, she heard a knock at the door.

" Come in !" said she, raising her head, and hastily drying her eyes.

And the next moment Mr. Lethbridge entered.

" I—I—beg your pardon," said he—not only hesitating to advance, but almost turning back—" but I thought—that is, I came to give Miss Egerton a lesson this morning, for I feel I have been very remiss of late."

" Oh !" said Mrs. Penrhyn, rising, and herself

placing a chair for him, "how unlucky ! for they all went about an hour ago, to pass a long day with dear kind Mrs. Lewyn."

"And you did not go?" asked Mr. Lethbridge, biting his lips, which indeed he might have known without asking, since he saw her there before him.

"No, I shall go for them in the evening; but I had several letters to write, and was glad to have the morning to myself."

"I fear I have interrupted you, then?" said he, rising, and making an attempt to go, and yet not going.

"By no means, for indeed I find I have such a headache that I cannot write; so, after all, must put it off to another day."

Here a silence of some seconds ensued; and yet Mr. Lethbridge did not go, but stood upon the order of his going, till his companion, in common politeness, could not but say—

"Pray, don't go; for I assure you, you have not interrupted me."

And he sat down.

Mrs. Penrhyn stirred the fire—a proceeding which, in a silent tête-à-tête, is perhaps quite as useful and satisfactory as a chorus in a Greek play; yet still Mr. Lethbridge kept looking into his hat, as intently as if he had lost some of his ideas and thought they must have fallen into it, and that he should be sure to find them there.

At length, however, he raised his eyes, and said, in a low, hurried, tremulous sort of voice, while a flush suffused his face, mounting even to his temples.

“I saw a paragraph in “The Times” to-day about a company which had been purchased by subscription, and a sword bought and sent out to that heroic young Penrhyn, of the Rifles, whom Sir Gregory has just told me was your son, for he said he felt too proud of him to conceal the fact any longer; so if I am indiscreet, you must pardon me, and blame him; but—but—I cannot resist congratulating you with all my heart. And yet I am sorry to see the traces of tears on your face; but happily there are tears of joy, as well as of tribulation.”

“Thank you for your congratulations. I need not tell you how gratefully and cordially I receive them; but, in truth, the triumphs of war must be always tempered with tribulation; for we never can tell how soon death may swallow up victory. But I think my tears this morning were not so much on my son’s account, as for one whose gentle goodness and pure unrippled nature has made her almost as dear to me as my own child; I mean dear May. Have you not remarked of late, Mr. Lethbridge, how terribly altered she is; and what a perfect shadow she is becoming?”

“Yes, I have been grieved to see her looking so

thin and ill ; but I thought poor child, that perhaps she was growing too fast. ”

“ Ah ! I fear it is more than that,” said Mrs. Penrhyn, as the tears again streamed down her cheeks, “ So young, so good ; it is hard ; for though fit for Heaven, she scarcely seems ripe for death.”

“ You know,” said Mr. Lethbridge, taking her hand, pressing it gently within his own, and looking earnestly into her face with an expression at once of profound sympathy and deep love,—

“ ‘Tis not the wrinkles years bestow,
The failing eyes, the locks of snow,
Nor time, that makes the sage ;
But *wisdom* is the hoary head,
And ’tis the life unspotted led
That forms the ripe old age.’

And death, though humanity never passes it without a shudder, is but Heaven’s portal, after all ; and who so fitted to gain admittance there as such pure, white-winged spirits as May Egerton’s. ”

“ True, indeed ; but it is not even my own selfishness that bows me down, and causes me to struggle against GOD’s will—if it *be* His will to recall to its eternal home that young bright soul—as that I fear May has something on her mind which she will not divulge, and which is rapidly mining her existence.”

“ We have all something on our minds,” sighed Mr. Lethbridge, looking down upon the little hand

he still held in his, and then up into her face, while the deep soft velvet azure of his eyes floated in diamond water, which wanted little to make it overflow in tears. We have all something on our minds, some mysterious link vibrating between the Creator and the created. Our outward bearing and material actions, like the wires of the electric telegraph, run along the highways of life for all to see, and all to comment upon ; but the harnessed lightning, the subtle fluid, that moves these outward agents, its mandate and its mission are known alone to their Author, and to those whom they concern."

"True," said she ; "but though life itself is but one long enigma, of which death is the only real solution, and though while we continue on this side the grave, we are surrounded with mystery as with an atmosphere, yet ONE unerring and unalienable certainty we *do* inherit—namely, the knowledge that we all *must* die. But even athwart this one certainty still rolls the dark cloud of doubt, for there lives not, who knows the *how*, *when*, or *where*, of their death."

"Generally, it is so ; and yet I think I know how I shall die."

She looked at him with a mingled expression of surprise and inquiry.

"Yes. The die is cast, and you *shall* know it, too," he rejoined, in answer to her look ; while

now pressing the hand he still held closely within both of his, and looking up into her face so earnestly that it was impossible that the slightest expression passing over it could escape him; "I said I knew how I should die—it will be of a broken heart—unless—unless—you will not only accept but reciprocate—the all-absorbing love which I have so long struggled against, only to be at length completely vanquished by it, and to lay it with myself, my life, and my fate at your feet; You cannot reject one without for ever crushing all—surely you will not! you cannot, with that face of angel-softness, have a heart hard enough to do this!"

"Me! love me? Impossible!" said she, rising up as if she had regained her feet by electricity; while, though for a moment a deep flush suffused her face, only to be succeeded the next by a mortal pallor there was over her whole countenance but one broad blank expression of unfeigned astonishment.

"Yes, impossible! That is impossible to help doing so," said he, also rising and putting his arm round her waist.

At length she said, gently disengaging herself from that support and leaning on the mantel-piece—

"Why! I am old enough to be your mother!"

"Were you old enough to be my grandmother,

and still what you are in appearance, I could only see in you not only the most beautiful, but the most noble-minded, noble-hearted and loveable of women ;—and so seeing, I could not choose but love you as I do, better than all other things here below ; better, oh ! far better than life itself, which, without you, I feel will be insupportable. Then tell me, at least, that you do not *hate* me, and I'll hope, I'll want, I'll try to make you love me."

"Hate you !"

"Well, no. That is too strong a word, for I don't think you *could* inspire so much love to repay it with hate ; which is seldom sown but by injury and outrage ; but tell me at least, that you do not resent my presumption."

"Alas ! folly is not always presumption ; but it is always folly, under whatsoever name sophistry may baptize it ; and I—I—hoped, that is, I thought, you loved May. She is *so* loveable, so beautiful, and not too young in a year or two to have been your wife ; and as many years difference as exists between her age and yours, in youth on her side, does not make so great a disparity ;—whereas, when the winter is on the side of the wife, and the summer on that of the husband, the world may only laugh. But Nature, whoever asserts her own rights, and vindicates her own cause, is sure, sooner or later, to make us pay the reckoning."

"May !" echoed he, as if in his turn awaking

from a dream; “yes, I have loved her, and do love her, as what she is, a beautiful and engaging child—a something gentle and fair, with the balm and breath of spring about it—a promise and a hope, making sweet harmony, and blent into one like the delicate perfume of the little flower whose name she bears. But—but—” added he, approaching her, and again taking her hand, “it was this hand that trained the May, which twined around my heart the all of happiness it has ever known. Oh, do not then rudely destroy your own work; but still tend what you have planted, and *may* blight, but *never can* uproot.”

“Do you know,” said she, not withdrawing her hand, and looking kindly and earnestly into his eyes, “I have often wished you *were* my second son: I should have been so proud of—so glad in you. Let me then *be* your mother. *That* I am capable of being, and fit to be; and believe me there is no love so holy, and so quintessential as that of a mother.”

“Mary!” he exclaimed, raising both her hands to his lips, and kissing them passionately, “I will not kneel *even to you*, the fairest, wisest, best of GOD’s creations—for to Him alone is such *outward* worship due; but could I but bare my heart, my soul before you you would there see all that to a mother was due, of the most tender and yearning respect, but at the same time, all that a woman

can inspire of the deepest, and most devoted love. And love is a *divinus afflatus*, a psychological æther, which admits of *no* intermediate nebulæ or vacuum. Friendship has a sphere of its own, but never can approach, much less attain to that of love."

"And still less can a lost Pleiad, that has once tripped against a cloud and shot from out its orbit. What I mean is," sighed she, "that even were our years equal, our hearts are not so: yours is fresh and young, full of high hopes and pleasant vistas; mine is hoary with Time's moss of many cares, and no prospects,——only dreary retrospects."

"That, indeed, is poor logic; for who would not refer one of those torn and time-touched Titians from the neglected walls of the Barbarigi, to the newest and most vivid sign-post ever painted."

"No—no—" said she, with a sigh, turning away her face, "I should have loved you first. A wreck is no fitting exchange for an argosy."

"That depends. It may be that something may be saved from the wreck, more precious, more costly than the whole freight of the argosy. I do not think that, had I known you in the first radiance and untempered bloom of youth, I should, or even *could*, have loved you then, as I do now; for then, what I most love in you could not have existed. It is that gentle and generous heart of yours—that brave noble nature—ever rising instead of sinking under the tyranny of fate—that strength to bear

the burdens GOD ordains; that courage to resist those men would impose, that has made of you a sort of spiritual Gideon, and moral Joan of Arc; and, my heart having dared to yearn after so high a standard, nothing less or nothing lower will satisfy it."

"Ah!" said she, mournfully, "I am not vain enough to accept your flattering estimation of my poor huckaback work-a-day qualities, nor worthless enough to take advantage of it. *You* have never even seen me tried; for here, what have I to bear but the most constant, the most affectionate, the most generous kindness."

"And," said he, interrupting her, "a better, or more infallible test of your nature than the congenial manner you respond to that kindness, the affluence of gratitude with which you repay it, and the minutely conscientious manner in which you credit its every item, I could not have. Besides, before I knew even your real name, Sir Gregory had given me your whole history, with an enthusiasm of admiration for the strength and rectitude of your character, which his own is fully capable of appreciating. So you see I may be, and *am* presumptuous; but I am neither deluded nor infatuated. Oh! do not then refuse to give me your heart, priceless as the treasure is; since you find that I am so far deserving of it as to be fully aware of its value."

"I can but repeat," said she, as the tears over-

flowed her eyes, "that I should have loved you first, for assuredly Horace Lethbridge deserves something better than the withered branches of a heart whose first fruits Andover Penrhyn did not think worth a care."

"Of *that* you must allow Horace Lethbridge to be the best judge. In the first place, I am no great admirer of first fruits, or rather first buds, for leaves and blossoms are fragile flimsy things; easily scattered by every wind; and even the fruits of young trees are crude and flavorless, as in all things maturity is necessary to perfection, but more especially in human passions and feelings, which, in early youth, are, for the most part, mere rash indiscriminating instincts, but especially that which we mistake for Love, which is, nine times out of ten, but the *shadow* his coming casts before, but, as a god it has sufficient of the *lux umbra dei* to make us eagerly expand the wings of our souls to catch its rays, mistaking it for the full meridian of that uncreated and all-penetrating light in which we shall bask hereafter. No, Mary," continued he, drawing her towards him and kissing the tears off of her cheeks, while his own mingled with them the while, "you cannot make me regret a past of which I have no reason to be jealous, for you were only then (from a very incompetent master, who could not impart what he did not himself know) learning the rudiments of that

great mystery I was to teach you hereafter. You did not, you could not love him; you shall, you *will* love me!"

"And," said she, raising her head and looking at him with a tender, yet complex and melancholy expression through her tears, "perhaps be wrecked again—like those vessels which go down without even the warrant of a storm, in broad daylight, beneath an unclouded sky, and amid the circling treacheries of a calm, waveless sea, Horace. Time will be that circling treachery to me."

"Never!" cried he, passionately pressing her to his heart; "never! till he has first engulfed me."

"Ah!" she resumed, "you think you know me, but you don't. With the hues of imagination you paint me an angel: whereas, in reality, I fear I have much more of the devil in me. I have never been tried but by those negative marriage pains and penalties, neglect and desertion; but I think, had I been tried, as some are, by every outrage, every injury cemented with insult, every persecution planned and executed with the most fabulous black-guardism, slimed over with a pompous public hypocrisy, and *chevaux de frised* with lies and perjuries, verily, I think I should have taken the law into my own hands; and, despising so cordially as I do the conventional cant of our *moral* society, which I know to be leprous with vice and petrified with

hypocrisy, I should have publicly exposed, in damning *facts*, unveiled by a single fiction, and undiluted by a single digression, a cowardly villainy against which *public* exposure is the only safeguard, and consequently for which it is the only remedy. From *you* I am well aware I have nothing of this sort to fear; yet that, perhaps, ought to be an additional reason for my not being so selfish as to accept a happiness which, under our present disgraceful legal and social code, so few have, and fewer can hope for. For who are our law-makers? Men who either have passed, or are passing, their lives in law-breakings, with Lord Chancellors, who have qualified themselves for the office and graduated in ecclesiastical knowledge by themselves having figured as defendants in *crim. con.* cases, and passed the best of their years in violating the laws of God and destroying that peace of families which, in the dregs of their existence, under favor of horse-hair and humbug, they are deputed to arbitrate upon. Under such a state of things it is impossible that society can be anything but what it is—rotten and hollow to its very core; or that marriage can be other than what *it* is—namely, a blasphemous, one-sided mockery, a saturnalia for men, and a Draco-like tyranny against women. We hear, it is true, of our ‘moral Court;’ but as long as not only such men but such women are received at it, the less said about its morality the better. It

would be a curious experiment in natural philosophy, and form a still more curious chapter in history, were Prince Albert suddenly to indulge that inquiring mind of his by taking a leaf out of the books of some of those gentry whom Her Majesty delights to honor. Now, having the use of my eyes and ears, I plead guilty to being perfectly incapable of man-worship in its catholic sense—that is, a tacit acknowledgement of the superiority of men as a sex, and a blind and deferential sort of mental genuflection to their self-delegated Pope-like infallibility; though where, individually, I meet with a man before whom Diogenes might have broken his lantern, and whose only approach to the wisdom does *not* consist in his having the sensuality of Solomon, I am very willing to concentrate all that respect and admiration, which I cannot diffuse in a general worship, into a sincere and particular homage.”

“And *that* is one of the chief sources of my respect and love for you; for I think, if there is any one thing more revolting than another, it is that inane, indiscriminate, and indelicately demonstrative adulation and admiration which English women—no, but ‘British females,’ as that class of women most appropriately call themselves—have for men as a sex. With regard to everything else you say, it is equally and indisputably true; but all these abuses arise out of that tissue of solemn

shams, that veneration for *names* and externals, which is the plague-spot of England, religiously, morally, socially and politically. A sect or a system is *per se* good ; therefore no matter how flagrant the abuses that may creep into them, or how grossly their professors may deviate from the tenets of the one, or the principles of the other ; let any one have the conscience or the temerity to expose the mal-practices of individuals, and point out their heresies, lo ! Cant immediately flies to the rescue, and Twaddle, with its heavy truncheon, loaded with the prejudices of ages, lays about it in all directions, vociferating that the sect or the system is in danger. It is for this reason that murder and every other species of immorality and debauchery may desecrate the Sabbath in *moral* England, as long as their orgies are held *within* the dark and chartered purlieus of vice, and proceed to the *outward* obligato accompaniment of church bells. To interfere with this progress of crime, when so conducted upon orthodox principles would be to infringe the liberty of the subject. It is only to lure them from these sinks of iniquity into the fresh air and under the free sky—that great dome of GOD’S universal temple—by the humanising influences of harmonious sounds on the sole day want allows them a respite from labour, that revolts the lip-worship of our Sabbatarians. *Only go to church.* When there, you may sleep,

make assignments, or pick pockets; *that* is of little consequence; the outward act of *going* to church is the thing they stickle for; and in continuation of this Pharisaical blasphemy, murderers, on the rare occasions which the philanthropic cant of the day allows them to pay the forfeit of their crimes, are made to pledge the gallows by profaning the Eucharist. But to show how well this veneering and varnish system works, and prove to what a charming state of universal good will to men, we are *outwardly* and *verbally* brought, the benevolence of the British public is occasionally regaled with such interesting “Memories of Sunny Lands” as a piece of Convict Court Journal from Australia, announcing that ‘Miss Emily Sandford,’ Mr. Rush, the murderer’s mistress, is ‘*quite well, and has a sweet little boy by Rush!*’ or a bit of Old-Bailey ‘Morning Post,’ in the shape of a *bulletin* extraordinary, informing the anxious British public that on his removal from Stafford Gaol the amiable Mr. William Palmer was looking remarkably well, and that his health had not in the least suffered from his imprisonment. Everything in England, morally and politically, from our total disregard of the *spirit*, and cavilling deferential reverence for the *letter*, is calculated not only to encourage, but to protect, vice; and it does so with a vengeance. I remember when my Lady G——e was ambassadress at Paris, some one expressing both regret and

disgust at the too bad conduct of that English Messalina, Lady——who, though her husband *was* a profligate, yet still he was not more so than the average run of English fashionable husbands, and was so far better that he had never personally ill-used her, or calumniated her, which latter he would indeed have found it difficult to do; but upon Lady ——'s conduct being thus animadverted upon, my Lady G——e's charming rejoinder was, 'Oh, poor thing; in her position one is so much obliged to her for whatever she does *not* do.' Now Lady ——, for instance, had better have twenty lovers a day than *say* the things of *her husband* that she does. The lady alluded to had a most loathsomely infamous husband in every way that could be conceived; but as she did not make herself either useful or agreeable at the English Embassy, in the former lady's style of "poor-thing" celebrity, of course there was neither pity nor toleration for *her*. And this is a fair average of the *elite* of English society, where, the more vicious both women as well as men are, the better they get on. The only unpardonable offence either can be guilty of is *verbally* infringing its conventionalities; for what the sin against the Holy Ghost is in the Church, *that* is against the *unholy* host in society. But the root of all this, both in Church and State, is Mammon-worship. Here is a nice little instance of episcopal charity, toleration and benevolence.

Many years ago a lady ran away from her six children and a very kind husband; for it is generally those women who have no provocation to misconduct who do these things. The case was a flagrant one, of great scandal, and the poor husband, being irreproachable, had no difficulty in getting a divorce—when the lady's paramour married her. In course of time he became a rich peer, and returned to the very neighbourhood (his property being now situated there) of her former husband. Of course those persons who remembered her heartless and unprovoked elopement did not conceive that a coronet had by any means extinguished the sin, and therefore would not visit her; but the bishop of the diocese, true to his Christian mission of peace-maker, himself went round the neighbourhood to remonstrate with the people, and try and persuade them to call on her—not on the score of her being a repentant Magdalen—not on the score that sin may be effaced by prayer and sorrow—not on the score that as we hope for mercy we should show it. No; all this would have been trite, puerile, and primitive, and, as such, beneath a Right Reverend Prelate of the nineteenth century; his lordship's arguments were far more cogent and, therefore, calculated to have more weight, for he represented to them what a dreadful thing it would be for the neighbourhood if, by not visiting Lady —, *they drove a man of Lord —'s wealth out*

of it to spend his money elsewhere. This was speaking by the card; and accordingly the next day the cards showered in upon Lady ——. With all these ‘wise saws and modern instances’ fresh in my memory, you cannot suppose—oh! noble, honest, and true-hearted woman—that *I* am shocked at your heterodox opinions. Far from it; the person who does *not* indignantly revolt at the horrible and colossal want of all principle, the abject Mammon-worship which is now the established religion of English society, and who has not the courage, openly and honestly, to express that indignation, only proves that they are one of the units of this corruption, the two main sewers of which are literature and politics; and all cliques of each, thanks to the clever unscrupulous *vaux rien*, who are the magnets of both, are now rapidly fusing into one great radical curve of infamy, whose orbit is SELF, and whose *soci* is POWER. No, best, and, because best, bravest of women, it is for this high-minded courage, this noble independence, that I love, that I venerate you; but, at the same time, knowing to what fearful odds such single and exceptional natures are exposed from the treacherous legions in the guerilla war of society, I would henceforth claim the proud privilege of throwing myself into the breach between you and them. As long as you are under the roof of so excellent and amiable a man as Sir

Gregory Kempenfelt, you are safe, and the storm may rage as it will without, its echoes cannot harm you; but I *shudder* when I think of what your fate *might* be, thrown on the world in so cruel and false a position—”

“Ah!” interrupted she, “every fresh instance you give me of your disinterested generosity only increases my gratitude, my——”

She hesitated.

“Say it Mary,” said he, pressing her hand within both of his, and looking imploringly into her eyes—

“My love!” murmured she, in a low voice, and she hid her face upon his shoulder.

“Ten thousand blessings on you for that word! Oh! let me kiss it into my heart—there to remain for ever more. Mary, you *have said it*—you cannot recall it; and so full is the measure of my happiness, that now Fate has not another hope, or another fear left for me.”

“I *have said it*,” said she, raising her head and placing both her hands upon his shoulders; “but what a folly! for again, I repeat it, you are young enough to be my son, and I ought to show my love by shielding you, and preventing your committing such a folly—and——”

“Nonsense!” interrupted he, drawing her to the sofa, and seating himself beside her as he still retained her hand; “to hear you talk, Mary mine,

one would really think that we were both fools, who could not afford to be even *suspected* of a folly; whereas we are quite wise enough, and *I* at least am sufficiently happy, to be capable of committing a thousand ! ”

“ Well, then,” said she, “ your grandmother must interpose her *authority* to prevent your doing so.” And she held up her finger menacingly, which hand he seized as well as the other, and, covering it with kisses, said—

“ No grandmother, if you please, for *that* is a *mauvaise plaisanterie* ; as the Table of Affinity forbids a man to marry his grandmother, which, by the bye, till lately, I have always thought a very supererogatory commandment ; but, thanks to the march of Intellect, and the counter-marches of Mammon, I now see that it was a prophetic necessity ; for in the present day, I verily believe men would not only marry their own, but the Devils maternal progenitress, for MONEY.”

“ Well, *that* at all events *you* certainly *won't* do,” smiled she ; “ but I was going to tell you, when you interrupted me, of another barrier to your folly and to my madness, which is, that nothing could induce me to be so ungrateful to dear, good, noble-hearted Sir Gregory, as to leave my three darlings, while I can be, or he thinks I can be, of the slightest use to them.”

“ Now listen to a few ‘ Hints from Horace ! ’ I

have thought of all that, though you do seem to have formed such an exaggerated idea of my ‘*folly*’!—but as you, by your own confession, are in a still more deplorable condition, being a poor maniac, I began by reflecting that after the luxuries and *bien être* of Baron’s Court the destitutions and deprivations of an itinerant curacy might be *rather* distasteful to you; and so last week, when Sir Gregory (who as I need not tell you is always inventing wants for himself, as an unsuspected means of conferring benefits upon others) asked me, as *a great favour, of course*, to commence Charley’s classical or assical education, and for that purpose, to take up my abode permanently at Baron’s Court I *kindly* consented to do so. But you must not upon that account suppose that I have not ample means of furnishing even a rectory if I could get one, let alone a curacy; for do you remember a little book I brought you some time ago, called ‘Confessions of a Village Curate,’ which you were graciously pleased, all in ignoring the author, to send me so flattering a critique of? Well,” continued he, taking out of his waistcoat-pocket a bank-post-bill for £732. 1s. 9d., and putting it into her hand—“*this* is the result of the Curate’s Confessions, and being indisputably the best part of them, may be considered as the Absolution. At all events it is an act of grace on the part of the publisher, which I

only wish could be made more catholic, for a universal postal arrangement decreeing that no letter should contain less than £732. 1s. 9d., would cure a great many heart-aches and right a great many wrongs. But this, coming to live at Baron's Court is, I assure you, as the linen-draper express it, parting with myself 'at a tremendous sacrifice!' For as I *know* my own little wife to be the very best housekeeper in the whole world, it would have been very darling to see her engineering away all the difficulties in a nut-shell home of one's own, to say nothing of that greatest of all marital luxuries, the having a person legally responsible for everything that went wrong in this terrestrial treadmill of ours, from a limp shirt-collar to an unartistically dressed leg of mutton, and being able to feel, or at least to say '*Mrs. Lethbridge it is entirely your fault.*'"

"As I fear, in sober sadness," said she, between a smile and a tear, "every evil of your life *would be*—if—if—you marry—for therein all the evil, lies—a woman old enough to be your mother. And besides there's Harcourt—what will *he* think of his mother's folly, or rather her madness?"

"It would be wrong in me certainly," said he, with a gravity so solemnly profound, that it amounted to a finer stroke of ridicule than the most cutting sarcasm could have achieved—"decidedly wrong, to urge you to *disobey* or do anything

undutiful towards your son. Still, from some of his letters that you have been good enough to let me read, and from his own achievements, I should not think he was the sort of person to draw the cord of his *just authority* too tight; but that, on the contrary, while he is playing cricket with red-hot shells, he would rather feel more comfortable that another life was equally devoted, and ready to be risked as freely for his mother as he is ever willing to hazard his for his country. Tell me Mary, *my* Mary, don't you now in your heart of hearts think he will?"

"I *do* think," said she, bursting into tears, and again hiding her face on his shoulders, "that what may be folly in me will be wisdom in him; and that he, like me, will find it impossible not to love one so supremely worthy of all love as you."

"Oh, Mary!" cried he, straining her closely to his bosom,—“let your own heart hear and feel *how* happy, how proud, it has made mine; and it will not doubt, for it cannot but believe that its very pulsation is a reiterated vow, *never* to cherish you less, nor to be less worthy of you, than I am at this moment, when, in receiving me into the holy sanctuary of your love, you have bound me to you by ties which not *even* death can sever; for I feel, that what time has begun, eternity *must*, and will continue; and that what are but mute quivering hearts *here*, will be exulting souls, fused in ONE ray

of quenchless light *there*, where planets pace unwearied sentinels."

"And even *here*, Mary, the blossoms our hearts have now put forth shall feel no winter's breath of coldness or of change; for are they not sheltered beneath Faith's cherub wing. So that even at the last, when we succumb to Death's stroke, we shall not feel his sting."

"*You* will not, I verily believe," said she, "whose life is passed in filling up your title-deeds for Heaven, and over all whose ways the Sacred Dove does indeed seem to brood—

‘Ripening thy soul apace.’

But with me it is different; for I sometimes feel as if the future would be too short to regret the past."

"A very wrong feeling, very unlike my own brave-hearted Mary; and above all, a totally useless one; for with me you shall have no past, and the only danger will be, or would be, were we mere worldlings, that the future will not be long enough for us to enjoy it; but *that*, with all others, is a branch of economy which I shall *expect you* to attend to, *Mrs. Lethbridge*,—or if you don't, you shall be well kissed."

"Take care," smiled she, "for, once married, there is apt to be an error in the orthography of that word, and what *was* kissed may *au pied de la lettre* become kicked; and I am going the right

way to merit this matrimonial *spell*, for I was very nearly forgetting and almost losing your seven hundred pounds, which I think is little enough for that most charming book. But here it is," added she, taking it up off of the carpet, and holding it out to him.

"No, no;" said he, "I want you to keep it as a beginning of 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow;' and to convince you that *mine* is not Mrs. Partington's version of that ritual, as she says from her experience, which is far from being an exceptional one, that, according to practical and ecclesiastical interpretation, it only means giving a wife a three-and-sixpenny cotton gown once a year; all the rest going upon the *indispensable* requirements of the husband."

"Ah! je comprends," laughed she, shaking her head at him; "vous voulez absolument mon beau, Monsieur, que je prends les arrhes de ma servitude."

"Juste! ma chérie, en effet e'est ma marotte."

"Allons! soumettons nous; la marée soutient," said she, humbly casting down her eyes and making him a low curtsy.

"Bien, fort bien!" laughed he, "rappelle toi toujours."

"Que—

'La femme elle n'est là que pour la dépendance,
Du côté de la barbe, est la toute puissance.' "

Here the half-hour dinner bell rang.

“The dinner gong ! Is it possible ? Why it is only three o’clock,” said he, looking at his watch.

“Yes ; we dine at three to-day, in order that I may go early to Mrs. Lewyn’s to bring home the children.”

“But remember, Mrs. Lethbridge, *not* to walk the roads *alone* at ten o’clock at night, for your *husband* don’t approve of it.”

“And what is a far more effectual preventative,” said she, making up a little mouth and looking pertly at him, as she put both hands in her apron pockets, “his wife don’t approve of it either.”

“Madam,” cried he, seizing her, and kissing her forehead, eyes, and mouth, “such speeches cannot be too soon checked.”

And he had scarcely time to check this one before the door opened, and Gifford came with “Miss Kempenfelt’s and Sir Gregory’s compliments, and that they hoped Mr. Lethbridge would stay to dinner ?”

Mr. Lethbridge was of course very happy to do so ; whereupon Gifford informed him that his room was quite ready, and that Mr. Twitcher was below, and was also quite ready, as he was going to dine there too.

Upon Gifford’s entrance, Mary Penrhyn having hastily replaced her letters and papers, and locked her desk, went to her own room to bathe her face and arrange her hair ; and as she went, in hastily

summing up all Mr. Lethbridge's good qualities she placed on the very first of the list of minor ones,, his delicacy and absence of all vulgar mindedness, in never having in the most remote manner even alluded to his future prospects of wealth and rank. And as she continued to fill in the picture with a thousand other equally attractive traits, and the ordonnance of it grew upon her, she ended by gradually feeling herself raised on a pedestal in her own estimation, to have inspired such a man with so deep, and, at the same time, so exalted and disinterested a love; but when, on reaching her room she cast a furtive look at the glass, and it reflected back her face, flushed with excitement, and her eyes red with weeping, she could not help exclaiming aloud, as she brusquely strained back her hair, as if *it* had been to blame, (as indeed, in a great measure it had, being exceedingly luxuriant, soft, chestnut, satiny hair)—

“Poor young man, what an infatuation!” And then, as suddenly letting it all down, and brushing one side of it in such a pausing, absent, listless manner, that she looked more like a person mechanically endeavouring to complete her toilet in a state of sonnambulism, than a lady hurrying down to an early dinner, as she added aloud—

“But, Harcourt! Harcourt! What *will* he think of it?”

And at that very moment, Harcourt, who had

refused to return to England, and had once more rejoined his regiment—having only availed himself of three, of his six months' leave—and who had not yet received his mother's answer to his last letter written on board "the Esmeralda," was walking up and down before his own hut, the cold north-east wind blowing diluted icicles into his eyes, in return for straining them far across into the roads, where that coquettish little craft *used* to ride at anchor—his arms tightly folded, and his lips bitten, as if they were superfluous appendages that he was determined to rid himself of—was in his own mind saying—

"I wonder what my mother *will* say?"

And so—and so—the wheel goes round; the same gyrations for each and all, the only difference being, whether we are on an upper or lower spoke of it, or merely fixed, as a dignified and unbiassed spectator, in the lynch-pin. In a word, whether we are *under* it in the mire, or at the top of it, and VERY SUCCESSFUL.

CHAPTER III.

In which Mr. Twitcher announces his heroic conduct in having joined the Militia, since the rumours of Peace were daily approaching nearer to a certainty; and also distinguishes himself as a grand homme de bouche.—An Argument.—An Electric Telegraph Despatch.



MIRABEAU said of Necker “that he was the victim of his own ambition, and the martyr of his own success—that he was the jest of courtiers, and the idol of the mob—that he had

neither country nor friends—neither a series of political principles, nor a knowledge of mankind—that he only sought applause, but never thought of securing esteem—that he understood neither the present nor the future, and had just sufficient

intellectual force to goad him into aspiring after the first offices of State, while he was totally destitute of the talents that could give them utility and fame." Alas! how many heirs has the financier left to these attributed antithetical cravings of his impotent ambition, with this difference, that in these days of microscopic meanness and retrenchment in all things save cant, vice, and humbug, not the screw, but the screw-propeller is applied! And among these heirs in curtailed proportions figured Mr. Twitcher, who was pre-eminently the victim of his own ambition, without, on that account, being a martyr to any sort of success whatever; but he was the victim of his own ambition in this, that the trouble he gave himself to attain to a ridiculous and unenviable notoriety, far exceeded in arduousness the labours of the most useful and self-sacrificing member of society that ever existed. Since we last had the pleasure of seeing him, he had super-added to the structure of his literary Castle in the Air a political story, the architecture being of that species denominated "a folly;" so that he had now the felicity of being member for Muddle-cum-Fudge, and constituting an additional ornament (?) to my Lord Oaks's party. But as all M.P.'s. seem to consider themselves great guns, and consequently to bear in mind that the greater the *bore* the greater the report, even when only in the

rudiments of parliamentary humbug, they leap at once into the fifty-ass-power boredom, of crammed speeches and adjourned debates; and Mr. Twitcher, with his own pre-disposition and ready-laid foundation for literary puffery, and political jobbery, was no exception to the rule, and was quite up to the times in his cravings for applause, without, in the least, caring for esteem, which was so far fortunate,—as the former is easily obtained, being in the gift of fools, whereas merit alone can insure the analytic tribute of esteem. In plain English, then, Mr. Twitcher was more egotistical, more inflated, and in every respect a greater bore than ever; or, as Miss Charity expressed it, “the man was an ambulating inverse martyrdom, for *he* stoned people to death with St. Stephen’s.” Upon the present occasion she and Sir Gregory had very nearly given up the ghost, as he had not spared them *one* of the “*hits*” (?), as he called them, which he meant to deal out as soon as the House met, upon the mismanagement of the war and the fall of Kars,—not, seemingly, being of opinion that by-gones should be by-gones, and thinking, like many more equal geniuses, that impromptus made at leisure, like javelins hurled from a distance, fell with a double force. As he was taking Miss Kempenfelt in to dinner, he further informed her, that despite his mother’s objections, he was going to vent his military ardour, and acquire additional

popularity among his constituency by enrolling himself in the Muddle-cum-Fudge Militia.

"Well," said Miss Charity, in answer to this interesting announcement, "you *will* be a hero, Mr. Twitcher, as the *on dit* on every side is, that we shall soon have peace."

"It's the principle—it's the principle—Miss Kempenfelt," rejoined he pompously, with, at the same time, a look of amiable condescension, such as Cæsar might have assumed in deigning to explain his strategy to Calphurnia; "every Briton should be trained to deeds of arms."

"It must be the principle, I suppose," matter of facted she, "for neither the pay nor the patronage is much in those militia regiments; so it can't be the *interest*. But as for deeds of arms, I think in the Muddle-cum-Fudge Militia they seem trained to deeds of legs, as six of the men ran away again last week."

Upon seating themselves—

"I fear, Mr. Twitcher," said Sir Gregory, "you won't be able to dine at this primitive hour; but my little people are passing the day at Mrs. Lewyn's, and we are dining early, to give Mrs. Pemble the power of going to bring them home."

But Mr. Twitcher, who appeared greatly to approve of the faultless *purée à la bisque* that he was discussing with far more ability than any political question he had yet grappled with, assured

him that among the practical phases of his character, was that of an impartial and unbiassed appetite, which enabled him to eat equally well at all hours—an assertion he fully corroborated by the vigorous siege he forthwith commenced against the first course; till having, after several most successful skirmishes with *all* the *entrées*, returned for the “second time of asking,” to the saddle of mutton. Mr. Lethbridge, fearing it might soon deserve to lose its title as a *piece de resistance*, and therefore pausing with the carving knife suspended à la sword of Damocles, over its greatly diminished glories, said—
“There *is* a second course, Twitcher.”

Sir Gregory, who was very nearly laughing outright, at this broad hint, legitimised his smile by saying, “Go on, Lethbridge, for perhaps Mr. Twitcher is like *another* (?) very learned gentleman, the venerable Dr. Courayer, who lived, by the bye, till ninety-five; but when he was in England, dining one day at a lady’s, he also seemed to patronise what Lord Chesterfield used to call ‘cellar stuff, and kitchen stuff,’—to wit, the first course. When the second made its appearance, the lady of the house asked him what he would take. ‘Oh! pardon me, Madam,’ said he, ‘and don’t tax an old man with profaneness, when I assure you that seldom, through a long life, have *I trusted to Providence for a second course.*’ ”

Mr. Lethbridge and Mrs. Penrhyn both laughed at the *à propos* of this anecdote ; but Mr. Twitcher seemed to view it solely in a utilitarian and statistical light ; and as he announced to Gifford his intention of taking another glass of champagne "he merely observed, that Dr. Courayer seemed to have been like himself, a *practical* man, and have always seized the present, and never have trusted to the future ; more especially where the granting the supplies was concerned."

"How gets on the Hebrew, Lethbridge?" asked Sir Gregory.

"Very well indeed, as far as Miss Egerton is concerned ; but I am sorry to say I have been rather remiss of late ;" and the stolen glance he gave to Mary Penrhyn caused her to color to her very temples.

"Perhaps it is as well that you have," sighed Sir Gregory, "for, poor dear child, she looks wretchedly ill—so ill that I wanted to take her to Llandidno or Tenby ; but she seemed so averse, from the idea of leaving home, that I ceased to press it."

"I think it is that she grows so very fast," said Mr. Lethbridge.

"Ahem !" cried Mr. Twitcher. At length, resting on his oars, leaning back in his chair, and looking and feeling like a man who had done *his* part, and that *more* could not be reasonably expected

from him, at least for the *present*. So twitching up his spectacles, he said with a smile, which he intended to be very sarcastic and superior—

“Ahem! Do you think it advisable to teach women Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, and all that sort of thing. Don’t you think it is putting them too much on a par with us, and, above all, taking them too completely out of their own sphere, which is a strictly domestic and subordinate one.”

“There is a very clever writer of the present day,” rejoined Mr. Lethbridge, “who has expressed his jocular alarm upon the strides women have made in America in masculine professions, by saying, ‘fancy a lady a wrangler, either in the common, or the Cambridge sense of the term; I would as soon the one as the other. When you heard her talk of *pie*, you would never think she meant 3.14159.’ “And truly I must say that on the slightest projected amelioration of the laws against women being mooted, men seem to be instantly smitten with a prophetic plague of pies and puddings being swept from the earth, out of the catalogue of womanly achievements, and at the very least, 3.14151—*strong-minded*, sea-serpent, *sesquipedalian*—words furnished as a contingent to every female tongue in lieu of them. Now the Miss Egertons for instance, though guilty of having their minds and intellects expanded to the uttermost, as their hearts are expanded with them,

have found the just equilibrium of the many sided capacity which God bestows in greater and lesser degrees on *all* human souls, without any reference or restriction to sex ; and therefore, despite their superior intellectual acquirements, or rather on account of them, those young ladies are not only incomparable housekeepers,—but, to use your favorite word, Mr. Twitcher—excellent *practical* cooks, and in every way thoroughly *useful* as well as agreeable members of society.”

“ Oh, of course,” said Mr. Twitcher, “ there are always exceptions to every rule ; but as a principle, I must say, I think it is a great mistake to enlighten and emancipate women. There was a very good article to that effect the other day in ‘ Blackwood,’ on the Rights of Woman Question,—saying, that although the laws now existing against them, and giving them no earthly control over their property, or anything else, were certainly hard ; yet, to have them repealed, and power and protection awarded to woman, would do away with that charming, and *feminine* reliance on men, which was one of woman’s greatest attractions ; and, therefore, it was better that things should remain as they were.”

“ Much better, for very infamous and utterly unprincipled men, like some of the contributors to Blackwood, who, was there a single law for the protection of women, could not certainly with impunity indulge in such outrageous iniquity, or

such a *léchamel* of GOD's commandments and human decencies as they do; neither could there be such a *sui generis* in their blackguardism, all of which, the *right of might* authorizes, and the conventional seal of silence on the lips of the victim wife secures. But, as I said before, knowing who the chief contributor to 'Blackwood' is, such an article had as good a grace in its pages as if some humane person, having discovered a method by which poor animals might be converted into beef and mutton, without being first goaded, and driven, and ultimately having their throats cut, a round-robin from all the butchers would have, owning that certainly the poor things *were* greatly tortured, but that still, it was better that things should remain as they were, for the proposed alteration would, entirely do away with that confiding innocence that lambs now had, in being led to the slaughter, and which was one of their chief charms. But you need not be alarmed, Mr. Twitcher, 'THE COMING MAN' may come it as strong as he pleases; but in *this* generation, upon this *one* point of keeping the fetters upon women, they are all (with the exception of that very small minority of moral, Christian, and good men, who, having *no* evil courses to pursue, or no inclination to tyranny, have *no* interest in perpetuating the facilities, and immunities now insured to them for both—with these rare exceptions then) I repeat, they are all

unanimous in riveting the fetters of woman, be their politics or creeds wide as the poles asunder. In *this*, at least, sure as the antistrophe always answers the strophe, and the epodes each other in a Pindaric ode, so will they always respond in unison, when this one chord is touched, however skilfully, or ignorantly. But woe! woe! eternal woe! betide the woman who presumes to meddle with this Eleusinian mystery, the chief *μυστηρία* of which so vitally concerns them, for though the magnates of the press will be sure to pass over her delinquencies in contemptuous silence, *deeds* not *words*, being their motto where a woman is to be crushed; yet the Tritons of the minnow provincial press will not fail to scavenger's-daughter and thumb-screw her as 'The Furious Fair,' or some equally namby-pamby vituperative, appropriate to female inanity.'

"The worst of it is," said Sir Gregory, "that until women *are* both legislated for, and protected as human beings, the race of men cannot be improved, and we shall continue to have the same '*ornaments*' to public life and disgraces to humanity that we have now—cant, and clap-trap, supplying the place of conscience and consistency. Jews may be emancipated, or corn-laws even repealed; but, like the Eleusinian mysteries to which you just now alluded, they will take care the Ceres share of them, the *αγρία* shall still be the portion

of women. But in spite of all this, their day of redress *must* come."

"You seem to really believe, with Buffon, then, *que les races se feminesent*, and that women *do*, hereditarily and morally, affect the characters of men," said Mr. Twitcher, adding—with his little cackling laugh, as with a tweezerish jerk he tried to clutch one of the "few and far between" bristles, upon which he had bestowed the title, by courtesy, of "moustaches"—"well, I don't know what to say to *that*, for it is impossible for any one to be a greater negative than my mother; and indeed so is my father,—so I'm sure I don't know what *I* can be? He! he! he!"

"Why, an affirmative, of course," suggested Sir Gregory, "as that is the proverbial result of two negatives."

But Mr. Twitcher, either not taking, or not liking the jest, passed it entirely over, and said—

"Oh! but don't you think *we*"—meaning the legislature—"are doing a great deal for women just now?"

"I cannot say that I do. All I daily see is, that the laws of the land, and the laws of English society, are both so generally kind that they allow any martyrs they may make, to suffer and writhe under those sufferings as much as they please, provided they do *not murmur*; for it is the *complaint* that is deemed unlawful, and *contra bonos mores*,

at least in women ; for if a *man*, be he only a chimney-sweep, is oppressed, it is quite lawful for *him* to resist to the death, and to be armed to the teeth in his own defence. But despite all this, and strange as it may sound to the ears of the orthodox, stuffed as they are with those wool-gatherings of ages—hereditary prejudices—I feel convinced that Time, the sire, and Nature, the mother of all great changes, are about to have another of their luminous progeny registered on the world's archives, even that of JUSTICE FOR WOMEN. Nay, my good Sir, you need not look so surprised. Rather take up your history book, turn over its tenebrous pages, and, amid the darkest, you will suddenly find vivid and striking illuminations—sometimes alas ! red with blood, but always followed by purer rays of golden light ; and then you will know that even this day *must* also dawn. Oh, king, live for ever ! was the impious eastern salutation. Nevertheless, where Belshazzar revelled, and Solomon ruled, silence *now* reigns, and the wild ass grazes. In like manner, the sway, and the fame, of the Cæsars, once filled the world, as one universal atmosphere ; yet Imperial Rome is now no more. And, to come nearer to our own times, Charles the First lost his head by all the laws he had left the people ; and Cromwell usurped his sovereign power by the same charter. France, like an infuriated war-horse, snorted, plunged and struggled neck-deep

in blood out of the trammels, trappings and fettering housings of the *ancien régime*. In the Inquisitorial dungeons of Venice and Genoa, where erst oppressed humanity groaned out its last mortal agonies, Commerce now stows away her plenteous stores; and, though last, not least, Catholic emancipation, *the* great political chimera of centuries is *now* an achieved *fact*, enrolled among the laws of the land. But, oh! what dreadful heresies preceded it. What a knocking down of orthodox, autocratic and hereditary powers, like nine-pins; and *that*, not by an oligarchy of bold barons, but by a mobocracy of boors and menial dependents; for there came a culminating epoch, as there ever *must do* before all monstrous chronic injustices can be shuffled off, and at that daring and terrible crisis, even the omnipotent Beresfords were defeated by plebeian resolution at Waterford, as were the aristocratic Jocelyns at Louth. Nay, more terrible than all, Lord Waterford's huntsman (the hound!) actually dared to vote against him; but still, true at least to his vocation, he was in at the death; for he was called to the bed-side of his departing master to receive his dying reproaches for such unparalleled, not to say sacrilegious rebellion, as that of a *dependant* and a menial presuming to vote against a marquis and a master. Yet nevertheless, the serf, the slave, had somehow or other got a glimmering that GOD and

his own soul were to be obeyed, even before a lord and master. And so it will *at length* be with women who have too long perilled *their* souls by being of the temporising policy of Phœbus, in Dryden's *Amphitryon*, and thinking that—

‘ Since arbitrary power *will* hear no reason,
 ‘Tis wisdom to be silent.’

However, the time is fast approaching when this rule will be infringed; indeed, it is virtually so at present. ‘It is a great pity,’ says Mr. Russell, ‘The Times’ Correspondent, in one of his admirable letters from the Crimea,—‘It is a great pity that it is not permitted to us to hate the Turks in Turkey; certainly it is done to a vast extent without permission in the British army.’ It is also a pity that it is not permitted to wives to hate *their* Turks *out of* Turkey; nevertheless, it is done to a vast extent *without* permission among *British females*. And no wonder; for tyranny is at once the usurper and the assassin of power; but unfortunately, notwithstanding the pother we keep up about liberty and justice (?), we have in reality neither the one nor the other; nor could we have, where Mammon and might are paramount; for in moral England all justice, truth, falsehood, right, wrong, aggression and oppression resolve themselves into the national

L. S. D.

that great and mighty rallying point and symbol,

compared to which, the old Roman S. P. Q. R. is a sort of farthing rushlight myth. Thanks indeed to Publicity, that only *real* reformer and purifier, we have *now* no Judge Jefferys on the English bench; but believe me, in '*the sacred privacy of social life*'—that catholic sanctuary for the protection and refuge of *every* vice—despite all our cant about progression, we have plenty of small change for him, who are ever unsuspectingly pulling the strings of the world's Fantoccini, and getting the Royal Assent to many as pre-concerted and equally murderous, though less sanguinary, pieces of injustice, as that which has come down to us in a certain little historical record in the systematically planned destruction of an unfortunate woman, whose sole crime was having been remotely connected with the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth."

"Oh!" broke in Mr. Twitcher, "look what an uproar there was in London last year, when Lord R——, after a few months' marriage, deserted his wife, and went off with his French mistress, leaving a note on his wife's toilet to say he had never loved any one but this French woman, but hoped his wife would get well over her confinement. So you see, society did take the wife's part, then."

"No thanks to society, Sir, but to Lady R——'s relations not being *quite* fools, and to my Lord R——'s folly in not being content with committing adultery, but he must go and not only own it, but

own it to his wife ! and thus give her the redress of public sympathy—an asinine proceeding unheard of in these *clever* times, and in the all-privileged saturnalia of fashionable life, and which proved Lord R—— to be a mere mediocre tyro in profligacy. Had he been a genius, like that loathsome brute, Sir Janus Allpuff, for instance, he would better have understood the proper dare-all manner of riding the Satanic steeple-chase of crime, and so have avoided getting that awkward tumble into the mire of the odium of public opinion ; for with your ‘genius’—from his first vault into the saddle of the black steed the Prince of Darkness sends him for the race of TIME, *his* apostrophe to it is, ‘ Evil, be thou my good ; ’ and as he never deserts it, it never deserts him, but carries him high and dry over the quagmires and precipices, into which poor conscience-laden mortals fall. I think it is Addison who says, speaking of Socrates’ catechetical method of arguing, and Aristotle’s changing this mode of attack, by inventing a variety of little weapons called syllogisms, that after the European Universities, between the two found that there was no end to wrangling in this way—to mend the matter (?) they invented the *argumentum baculinum*, for which we have no nearer definition than club law ; so that when they were not able to refute their antagonist they knocked him down. It was their method, in these polemical debates, first to

discharge their syllogisms, and then betake themselves to their clubs; and, '*posing the syllogisms thus,*' as Sir Janus Allpuff would say, this is *verbatim ad literatim* the *only* law for wives in moral England. And the clever Sir Janus, being equally addicted to syllogisms and clubs, adopts precisely the same plan as these academical wranglers, first discharging his syllogisms at the public (in print), and then betaking himself to his clubs, or agricultural meetings, mechanics' institutes, testimonial committees, or any other of our solemn national humbugs, where tinkling cymbals and sounding brass drown the voice of truth, call she never so loudly for retributive justice. No wonder then that in our highly moral and religious country, where only Royal ears are allowed to hear music on the Sabbath, that such trifles as a man's violating every human and divine law in his own family, and being guilty of every meanness, every falsehood and every vice that can disgrace human nature, should be over-looked in consideration of the fine sentiments he writes and utters—or rather splutters—in public, or that the *guilt* of literature should set forth its ubiquitous puffery, and append to every railway volume of that brothel philosophy, and bundle of barefaced plagiaries, which Sir Janus calls his works, that '*they abound in illustrations that teach benevolence (?) to the rich, and courage to the poor; they glow with the love of freedom* (no

doubt, for himself and his blasphemous hypocrisy); *they speak a sympathy with all high aspirations, and all manly struggles' !!* Physically destroying one child—morally destroying another—kicking his wretched victim of a wife a month before her first child was born till she was nearly dead—turning that poor little martyr out of his house the moment she was born, as he ultimately did, to die—springing, in one of his rabid furies, upon his wife, and making his hideous horse-teeth meet in her cheek till the blood streamed down her, and ultimately turning her and her children out of their home to make way for one of his infamous mistresses—are, no doubt, among these high aspirations *and manly struggles!* and cannot of course be considered as the least infringement, either on humanity or morality; as in one of his books a whole chapter is devoted to a little blasphemous twaddle, on ‘the depth and purity of a father’s love for his first-born!’ and as not having even the courage of his loathsome vices, he never is to be caught doing *his own dirty work*, but employs some of his kept mistresses to write anonymous defamatory letters to periodicals against his wife, and *soi disant reviewers* (?) to write abusive ones to her. Truly the force of villainy and of humbug *can* no further go, and the *only* hypocrisy now left for the *honourable* baronet to enact will be, to join the crusade

against those brutal husbands who, in *low* life, mutilate their wretched legal victims, and empty their houses to fill the police-reports. And now that this said crusade is gaining ground I have no doubt that he will do so; for 'it is a noticeable thing,' as Mr. Thomas Carlyle would say, that this 'great' man never takes the *initiative* in any new movement, social or political. But as poor Brummell used to wait till the streets were aired before *he* ventured out, so 'Sir Janus Allpuff always takes the precaution to wait till each succeeding novelty is patented by popularity before he lends it his support; but *then*, who so loud in the hue-and-cry as he, or so prompt to incorporate himself with a *triumphant* cause, or nominal charity and to drape himself in that most graceful of all mantles, and cover for all sin—SUCCESS? Therefore, however outrageous such a man's *private* acts may be, a moral and discerning public, having nothing of course to do with *them*, when once this glittering mantle descends upon him, who can question the *mens sano in corpo sanso*. Æsop tells us that men are furnished with two wallets—one hanging before, and the other behind—and that they put their neighbours' follies and vices into that which hangs before, and hide their own in that which is more out of sight. But truly in England we have improved upon this apologue by the *cordon sanitaire* we have drawn between public

and private life, as if they were two different hemispheres that could *not* be inhabited by the same individual, and so bundle all the dark ugly realities into the posterior wallet, while the foremost one is brodered in the most glittering tinsels, and filled with shreds and patches of all the rainbow hues in vogue, like those mediæval *aumonieres* worn by the foremost hero in all popular pageants, who cried '*Nöel! Nöel!*' and in virtue of their gaudy pretensions levied contributions upon all whom they met. Oh, world! world! wilt thou never earn any other motto than—*CRUX ET VANITAS!*

"Well, certainly," cackled Mr. Twitcher, as he helped himself to a fifth brandied green-gage, and at the same time felt that his concentrated egotism was no match for the numerous and sledge-hammer facts Sir Gregory always brought to bear upon an argument; "we must allow, I'm afraid, that everything is politics and public life in England; and as you are a whig, of course I must not attempt to reason with you on that ground, Sir Gregory. He! he! he!"

"Whatever you do, pray don't calumniate me by calling me a Whig," rejoined Sir Gregory, or any other of those hollow-sounding brass names, for I am neither Whig, Tory, Peelite, Protectionist, nor any other of those political sign-posts that point the way they never go. No, thank GOD, I stand

aloof, amid a large majority of HONEST MEN, during this theocratic millenium, in which England will *not* take the initiative; for what great or real, that is, universal amelioration, *can* spring from a legislature composed of little, paltry, personal individual interests, the whole united only forming one great heathen arena of

TRY-TO-GET-ON-A-TIVE-NESS ?

In corruption, there is propagation too, but it is *only* corruption that it does, or *can* propagate; and as long as the *names* of Whig and Tory exist, and are represented by the *things*, 'MY OWN INTEREST' 'AND YOURS,' which constitute the sole *real* difference between this dual oligarchy which is always playing at "pull devil, pull baker," with the country, depend upon it that every man with a conscience will do as Cato did, when Rome was split into two factions between Pompey and Cæsar—declare himself against *both*. It is true that in the present day, as a *show* of enlightenment, the favorite game appears to be playing at bowls with all the orthodox prejudices of centuries, not only in the State, but also with its incompatible excrescence, the Church, and bowling them down as fast as possible one after the other. In a well-written and agreeable book which recently appeared, called 'BLENHAM, OR WHAT CAME OF TROUBLING THE WATERS'—the express purpose of it being to advocate religious toleration, and dealing a mortal

blow at the flagrant injustice of the compulsory Church-rate system which extorts money from Dissenters to support a creed from which they have separated themselves—a Mrs. Hollis, one of the *dramatis personæ*, says—‘suppose for instance, a law could be passed to authorise the taking away from me, by force, my children, and sending them nobody knows whither; would you have me submit patiently, and say it is the will of GOD? Should I not, on the contrary, be justified in resisting such a law in any way I judged best?’ Heaven bless the worthy woman in her happy ignorance, not to know that such an iniquitous law among many others equally so is passed, and has been always the law of the land in moral England, and that any, and every profligate brute of a husband (in *high life*, for in low there is a great deal of *verbal* chivalry about women, and not allowing the strong to oppress the weak), yes, any and *every* profligate, who does not care the whiff of a cigar for his children’s souls or bodies, has free and irresponsible power, if he is only villain enough to avail himself of it, to do whatever he pleases with them. When Mr. Ward, the Mormon, was remonstrated with by one of his wives upon the wholesale murders of the deserters from the Salt Lake to California, he coolly replied—‘*so long as the majority were in favor of such doings, the minority must either keep silent or share the same fate.*’ And so it is in this,

our land of cant; no one should dare to cast a stone into the cold foetid, stagnant pool of our social conventionality, without being fully prepared to go to the stake which they have risked. But let us hope that the day is fast approaching when the majority will *not* be satisfied with such doings—when good men who profit nothing by such barbaric laws, in order not only to *prove* that they *are* ‘good men and true,’ but also from *esprit de corps* to shew that they *are* the majority, will be the first to clamor for a repeal of those remaining brands of the dark ages; but till then the Anglo-Saxons must be content to pass their time, in giving Shakespear the lie—as he asserted that there was nothing in a name, whereas all England answers there is everything in a *name*, and nothing without it: as one among many proofs of which, witness the pious horror of Britons, at savage or Mormon polygamy; but *ad libitum* adultery and seduction never shocks them in the least; oh, dear no!—such little trifles only forming a part of ‘The adventures of a Gentleman.’”

While Sir Gregory was still speaking, a boy, in the livery of the Electric Telegraph Office, rode past the window at full gallop, and gave a loud ring at the door. Mrs. Penrhyn, who, from where she was sitting, had caught sight of him, turned as pale as death, and an involuntary scream escaped her as she fell back in her chair, and would

have fallen to the ground, had not Mr. Lethbridge hastily risen and gone to her assistance on one side, and Miss Charity, with her eau-de-Luce, on the other. The fact was, that living in constant terror of some fatal tidings of Harcourt, in the feverish agony of her anxiety, she forgot there was any one else in the house to receive a telegraphic despatch beside herself. When Gifford made his appearance with it, every eye tried to look over the salver at the direction, before he had time to close the door after him.

“For me?” asked Sir Gregory, looking, in spite of himself, a little nervous.

“No, Sir Gregory, it’s for Mr. Lethbridge. They had taken it to his house and were sent on here,” said he, handing it to him.

While he still supported Mary Penrhyn with one arm, he opened the letter with his disengaged left hand. As he read it, all eyes were fixed upon him, and, at his first glance at its contents, a vivid flush suffused his face, which the next moment became as pale as the snowy ends of his own neckerchief.

“No bad news I hope?” said Sir Gregory, eagerly.

“Oh, dear no; I suppose it is what would be called quite the contrary,” replied he, with an open and quiet expression of countenance as he put the letter into his pocket; “I’ll tell you all about it

by and bye ;” and then, pouring some iced water into a tumbler, he dipped his fingers into it, and sprinkled the face of his fainting burden till she revived, and, opening her eyes, met his anxiously bending over her ; he gently pressed her hand and said, “ Your son is safe, the despatch was for me.”

At this she immediately roused herself and apologized for the trouble she had given—became as red as she had just been the reverse, as if her fainting had let the whole world (including Mr. Twitcher) into the secret of how matters stood between her and Mr. Lethbridge.

“ My dear Mrs. Pemble,” said Sir Gregory, “ I think you had better go in the car for the children.”

“ No thank you, Sir Gregory, it is so very fine that I prefer walking ; and I’m sure the air will do me good ; so if you will kindly order the covered car to go at nine to Mrs. Lewyn’s to bring them home——”

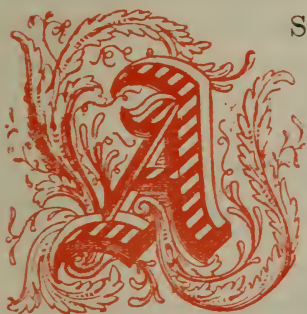
“ Perhaps Mrs. Pemble will allow me to have the pleasure of escorting her, as I am always glad to have an opportunity of seeing Mrs. Lewyn,” said Mr. Lethbridge, more with the air of a young Jesuit than of a young clergyman ; while she, with equal candour, bowed ceremoniously as she thanked him, and said he was very good, but that she feared it would be taking him away too soon from his wine.

“ Oh, not in the least.”

So, while she went out at one door to go up stairs and equip herself for the walk, he disappeared through another into the hall for his hat. Luckily, Mr. Twitcher made no offers, so got no refusals, for, thanks to what he called "the practical phase of his character," he, any day, preferred green-gages to governesses, and, therefore, as Mr. Lethbridge closed the door in pursuit of one of the latter, Mr. Twitcher helped himself to another of the former, making the sixth, but not last, which he had honored with his notice, in this instance not a *fruitless* one, as dinner was the only time Mr. Twitcher felt that he got his deserts, and *was* VERY SUCCESSFUL.

CHAPTER IV.

A Chapter of Confessions; in which it also appears how the Reverend Sabes Saml elucidates his text; and how Caffey Lloyd joins the Baptists.



As a reader for the time being stands always in the position of an author's Father-Confessor, the culprit author is in duty bound to have no reservations or concealments from him; for which reason we are now bound to confess that, upon emerging from the lodge gates of Baron's Court, and finding themselves in the high road, Mary Penrhyn and Horace Lethbridge, instead of continuing their way straight along it, which was by far the nearest route to Pen-y-coed, they turned up a set of little bye round-about, unfrequented lanes, even those in which they had met on the night of the lecture in the

school house, just eleven months before ; and this they seemed to do by tacit consent, and without uttering a word ; but on entering these lanes, or rather on reaching the one where he had on that occasion sprang out of the hedge, Mr. Lethbridge stopped, and pressing the little hand that was leaning on his arm more closely to his heart, he looked into her face, and said—

“Do you remember, Mary?”

“Ah ! what a lovely night that was,” said she ; “your words had filled me full of eternal hope, and it was not till I came out into the clear cold air, that all my earthly fears for Harcourt began to return thick and fast upon me ; and then I looked upwards, and as my eyes wandered amid the myriads of bright worlds above, my spirit began to ride at anchor amongst them, as I reflected that even if it were GOD’S will to sever my last earthly tie, still—

——‘To the watchful eye and ear,
All earth with sights and sounds is rife,
That speak the “Master’s” coming near,
And all the brevity of life.
The opening grave, the passing bell,
Of our own speedy funeral tell ;
And every ache and pain,
That strike from life’s calendar a notch,
Are omens of our sure decay ;
Heralds of mercy sent to say—
(Nor let them say in vain)

—— WATCH ! ”

“And amid all those wanderings in heaven and earth, not *one* thought of me at *that* time, Mary?”

“Yes,” said she, coloring to her very temples, “I wished, among this tangled web of present cares and fears, and on into the glorious halo of future certainty, that *you* had been my son, for I thought how proud——”

She hesitated a moment. And he said, reproachfully—

“*Only proud*, not fond of me, Mary?”

“That you know,” she rejoined, blushing even more deeply than before—“is a pride inseparable from the deepest, perhaps, the only really eternal love.”

He caught her to his heart; and, with one long, deep kiss, said—

“Mary! *my* Mary! tell me more—tell me *all* you thought on that night.”

“I then thought that if you *were* my son—though you would not, like my poor Harcourt, be exposed to death in ten thousand bleeding mutilated forms—that still those pale looks and that hollow cough of yours would have made me very wretched; and then—and then—I thought that you loved May, and that this love which you feared to encourage, it was, which was driving health from your cheek and mining your existence; and I would have given the world to have told you, could I have done so without compromising her, that nothing

Sir Gregory would have liked better, than that she should have been your wife; for this he once owned to me."

"You were right, Mary, as to the love that I feared to encourage sapping my existence, but wrong as to its object; for, from the first moment I saw you, it was *you* I loved. Your glorious beauty, in the first instance, stormed my heart as it were by admiration; but your still more glorious nature as I came to know you—so gentle in its strength, and so genial in its gentleness—so single in its simplicity, yet so shrewd in its sequences—its abnegation of self, and its devotion to others—led not only my every feeling, but my judgment, captive; and all in rendering you the unfeigned homage which even the severest scrutiny, and the nicest criticism could not withhold from you, I felt that the hard, unspiritual, disenchanting struggles of poverty were not exactly the offerings to bring to such a shrine. Dryden has happily designated your sex 'the fine porcelain of human nature;' and what business, I asked myself, even were I *sure* of not having my presumption punished with the scornful rejection it deserves—what business have I to transfer one of the very rarest specimens of this fine porcelain to the incongruous *entourage* of the delft and *willow* patterns of a village curate's *ménage*; and so, discretion being most assuredly the wisest part of valor where one's heart and soul

are in danger, even more than where only one's limbs are, I kept away from Baron's Court. But when the 'Confessions of the Village Curate' brought in a sufficient earnest of the future to allow of my trusting to it, I could no longer resist playing that bold game which Fortune is proverbially said to favour; and ascertaining if, without a single worldly advantage to offer you, you *could* love me sufficiently to merge your fate in mine—You know the rest. But—but—still your only having wished that I was your son, shows that you did not love me, Mary, as I would be loved, at least by you."

"On the contrary," murmured she, looking timidly, yet earnestly into his face, with an expression of love, so deep, so confiding, so sincere, that no mere words could ever have told half the eventful history it contained, "I think it shews that *even* when I thought you loved May, and never could have dreamt that you bestowed a second thought, much less one of affection, upon an old woman like me, there was an unsuspected latent folly stirring in my heart which set it upon seeking legitimate excuses to love you; and, not being able to find the justification it sought, it even invented an imaginary relationship,—which—which—would have converted a folly into a duty."

"Mary !" cried he, passionately pressing her to his heart, "I am a perjured apostate, for I told

you I loved you from the first moment I saw you. It was false, I never loved you till *now* ; but now it is with an eternity of devotion that never could have been created ; it *must* always have existed, and, having done so, can have no end." "But," added he, releasing her from his embrace and again replacing her arm within his, as they walked on, "*self* being satisfied, and having gained what is, to me, the whole world, I have now time to think of others ; so tell me, how came Sir Gregory to tell you that he would have no objection to May Egerton's marrying me ; or rather, how came he and you to speak on such a subject at all ?"

"Well," said she with a slight hesitation, and amid many renewed blushes, "I suppose I must have very soon begun adopting you as my son, and so I acted precisely as I should have done had my poor Harcourt, with his noble, loveable nature, handsome person, and empty purse, been thrown into close and constant communication with such a beautiful and attractive girl as May. I told him that I thought such a state of things was not only highly imprudent, but cruel in the extreme to both of you—whereupon he said, that he thought *you* looked upon May as a mere child, and had no idea of her in any other light. I then suggested that *she* might love you, and, therefore, the same objections existed against his giving her so dangerous a preceptor. He said he would not,

indeed, for worlds have her happiness risked or wrecked if you did not care for her; but that if you did, nothing would give him greater pleasure than such a marriage, as, even in a worldly point of view, it would be by no means so imprudent a one as I seemed to think, as you had some distant relation—I forget the name—Lord Somebody, to whose title and fortune you were heir-presumptive; and though, like most rich relations, he, with imperturbable philosophy, left you to starve now, as far as he was concerned, yet that he could not, in the natural course of things, prevent your succeeding to his title and estates, but as he was barely sixty, you might serve a long apprenticeship to privation first. And this reminds me, Horacē, that although when you so generously offered to make poor me—a destitute governess—the sharer of your fortunes, you never even alluded to this contingency, which, as another proof of the independence and disinterestedness of your nature, gave me the superfluous aid of an additional excuse for my folly; yet, do you know, this probability in itself, instead of being an inducement and an advantage to me, is rather a drawback—not indeed so much the idea of your, at any time, being the possessor of a wealth, which no one would make a better use of—for not only am I well aware that no great good either to ourselves or to our fellow-creatures can be achieved *without* money—but having had a

pretty good experience of the nipping, withering influences of all the weary, work-a-day, up-hill, toiling cares of poverty—that real Valley of the Shadow of Death, wherein Heaven’s two spies, Hope and Faith, find it so difficult to reveal their Eschol pledges of the land of promise, I shudder at the bare idea, and recoil still more from the reality of seeing anything I love exposed to them; but for many reasons—all perhaps one more selfish than another—I would far rather your way of life remained in its present quiet sphere—first, because from my experience of it I have the most insurmountable distaste, and the most sovereign contempt for the rampant vice, the radical hollowness, the eternal swamping of all principle in the spring-tides of expediency which constitute the chief schedules in that great charter of exemption from all human responsibilities and all divine laws, which our *haute volée* have granted to themselves, and which, having been framed in corruption, is varnished over with a little *verbal* orthodoxy, and next——”

“What next?” asked he, finding that she paused—

“Why nothing but a touch of female vanity, not worth perhaps giving you the triumph of knowing,” laughed she.

“Nay *now*, I insist upon knowing it—as it will, as you truly say, be such a triumph to my mascu-

line superiority (ahem !) to find a single flaw, however slight, in your terribly humiliating perfection."

"No sir, since you take to irony and to amusing yourself at my expense, you shall *not* know it, but instead, I will tell you something that will effectually lower *your* vanity ; which, like the intellectual superiority of your sex, *without exception*, I acknowledge to be so much greater than ours. Know then, that having told you what *were* my fears about dear May, I think it also right to tell you that, no longer being able to bear a doubt which I now find was more completely torturing to me than I then even suspected, the other day I screwed my courage to the sticking point, and asked her the coarse and point-blank question, whether *she* cared for you ; and she answered with the first joyous laugh I have heard from her for many a long month ; ' What an idea ! ' and followed it up with an emphatic ' No ! ' which was an immense relief to me."

"What an idea, indeed," echoed he ; "a most absurd one ! for May is such a perfect child."

"Oh ! if *that* were the *only* impossibility, ' out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee,' for I don't see anything more absurd, while it is certainly less preposterous, in a man's being in love with a girl young enough to be his daughter, than in his being guilty of that folly with a woman old enough to be his mother.

“And out of thine own mouth will *I* also condemn *thee*,—for May is sixteen, and I am eight-and-twenty, therefore, I could not well have had the honor of being her father at the *pre-mature* age of twelve; and as Sir Gregory told me you really were nine-and-thirty, though no one to look at you, would give you credit for that age within twelve years, yet as even in *reality* you could not well have had the satisfaction of being my mother at eleven years old, I must beg, that in future, as *my wife*, you will not indulge in such tremendous exaggerations, amounting to positive, I won’t say *what!* And so, having drawn up your condemnation—for you know *rien n’est brutal comme les chiffres rien n’est entêté comme les faits!*—in order to make this condemnation both valid and irrevocable, I must seal it,” added he, kissing her. “And now, what way the ‘*and next*,’ that you stopped at, for *I must* and *will* know; and therefore shall stay here all night till you tell me.”

“That will be only hastening the event,” smiled she, “through grief at such terrible obstinacy—for the ‘*and next*’ that I was then thinking of was, that the crows’-feet which *must* come very soon, if indeed they are not already come, would be much better hidden under the sheltering coif of a curate’s wife than under the blaze of a coronet.”

“You never were more mistaken; for even supposing the evidence of the transit of a whole

rookery—far more numerous than the legions composing the flight of the Israelites out of Egypt, *were* to leave their foot-prints at the corner of either eye, yet, gilded by the refracted rays of a few glittering strawberry-leaves, the whole world would think, or at least swear, that the said crow's-feet were far more beautiful than the most bewildering dimples that could possibly lurk beneath the cap of a curate's wife. And, in the next place, the crows, having a three or four hundred years' lease of their lives, out of gratitude to Time for the grant, always walk in *his* steps; and as he seems to have turned *purposely* out of his way to avoid you, pray do not be so mean as to insist upon running after him and seizing him *nolens volens*; though as there is no chance of your being able to do this, the court rules, that the crow's-feet are inadmissible as evidence."

As he said this, they came out into another high-road, a parallel one to that which they had quitted, and which led both down to Mr. Jowl's church and to Mrs. Lewyn's house; and they had scarcely turned into this road before they saw that reverend gentleman himself, a little in advance of them, but in such a tottering state that, although he was not in the act of solemnizing a marriage, he was "*assisted*" by Taffey Lloyd on the one side, and Gabriel Griffiths on the other; who both had great difficulty in forcibly preserving Mr. Jowl's equilibrium for him.

“Good heavens! Mr. Jowl appears to be in a fit,” said Mr. Lethbridge; “stay here, Mary, one minute, and I’ll go and help them to get him into the vicarage, which is not above a hundred yards farther on.”

“No, no, dear; pray, don’t go,” said she, retaining his arm with both her hands, so as to prevent his proceeding; “don’t you see what sort of a fit it is?”

“For shame, Mary.”

But Mr. Jowl, breaking from the friendly restraint of one of his supporters, at this moment struck out his arm, and, apparently mistaking poor Taffey’s back for a pulpit, began thumping on it with a degree of vengeance, which *only* pulpit cushions can or do endure without reproach or retaliation; and, while indulging in these gymnastics, he hiccuped out—

“Be ye not drunk with *woine*, but filled with the *sperit*!” and then with an ineffectual effort at a sonorous *ahem*—such as he was wont to arouse his congregation with, which, however, broke off into the splinters of another hiccup—he roared out—

“And what says *Mosses*?”

“Well, Sir,” replied Gabriel Griffeths, to whom this query seemed to be more especially addressed, “I’m sure I don’t know what he *would* say, if so be as he was to catch sight of you in this state.”

“Oh! ye of *litttle* faith; I tell ye such doings are an *ab-bummination* to the LORD—military music on the Sabbath, centurian *sensuolity*, *woine*, and wickedness, instead of being filled with the *sperit*, as *Mosses* and the Prophets were, and as I am now. Do you *moind* me, Gabriel Griffeth, thou *scroibe*, and thou Taffey Lloyd, pharisee that thou art, do ye heed how the *sperit* abounds in me?”

“Indeed, Sir, I’m thinking it’s abounding rather too much in you to-night; and the sooner you get home the better, lest any of the Phillistines, as you call them, should——”

But here a servant appeared from the Vicarage, and, lending the aid of his powerful arm, at once released, and, relieved the writing-master from his arduous task. And upon being towed to his own gate, and told where he was, Mr. Jowl converted himself into a fabulous monster by incorporating Noah and the ark into his own person, and announcing that he—that is, they—had arrived at Mount Arrarat; and asking Gabriel if he knew what Noah did when he got out of the ark?

“Oh, yes, Sir; but you are now only going into it; so it’s a pity you should have done it at the wrong time.”

“How disgraceful!” sighed Mr. Lethbridge. “Let us wait here till he has got into the house; for I would not give him the humiliation of knowing that I had seen him in such a state.”

A few minutes after, Taffey Lloyd passed them on his way home, and, taking it for granted they had witnessed the scene, as indeed they had, he said, with a laugh to Mr. Lethbridge, as he touched his hat—

“Well I can’t say I be sorry, Sir, as you’ve seen the way as Parson Jowl is filled with the sperit. This being Wednesday, that was the ‘*dential tex*’ as he give us this aternoon, of ‘Be ye not drunk with wine, but filled with the sperit;’ and so to carry it out like, he goes and calls on the gent down yander what praches to the West-lions (Wesleyans);—noa, I don’t mean that neither, I makes a niistake—I should say on that ere Baptist *pracher*, Muster Doubleface Dipdolt, who had a lot of what he calls ‘*his lambs*’ with him, but I calls ’em his water-wagtails. There were a matter of four or five on ’en with Judas Iscariot Jones, the red-haired flannel-factor, and his sister Jezebel Price; they as that Sir Janus Allpuff got, that ’ere Barnes, the literairry gent and the street-walker as was with him, to ‘*have* so infamous to his wife; for Judas Iscariot Jones you see, sir, don’t bely his name, and would sell his GOD, let alone a lodger, for money; and as for that flaunting hussy, Jezebel Price, his sister, its *unpossible* to tell whether there’s most fibs or finery goes to the putting on her together. Well, Sir, when they was all assembled at Muster Dipdolt’s and had howled a

hymn, in comes the punch-bowl, with wine and all, and cold *mate*. I was a training up the vine the way it should go, round the parlour window, and so I seen it and *heerd* it all. Muster Dipdolt, he axes Parson Jowl to *jine* them in a loving cup; but Muster Jowl, he puts up his hands and says, 'No wine, Mr. Dipdolt; I've just been praching against the indulgence in that treacherous liquor; you know the *tex*', 'Be ye not drunk with wine.' 'But on the other hand, Muster Jowl, says Dipdolt, ye know we are commanded to be filled with the *sperit*; and with that he ladles out a tumbler of punch, and hands it to Parson Jowl, who makes no further objections, only saying summut about *Mosses*, as he calls him, striking the rock, and the living waters gushing forth, and with that he strikes the *tay*-spoon *agin* the side of the tumbler, and *swallers* the punch as if it had been only pure water, sure enough. He! he! he!"

"Taffey, it was very wrong of you to stand looking and listening to what was going on in Mr. Dipdolt's parlor; and that was by no means training *your own* vine in the way it should go; and after all, Mr. Jowl no doubt only took the punch out of civility to Mr. Dipdolt, whose guest he was at the time; and it's having such an effect on him is much to his credit, as it shows how little he is in the habit of taking anything of the kind."

"That's very good of you, Mr. Lethbridge, Sir,

to give it that turn, for I'm sure *you* are the last man in the world as Parson Jowl *desarves* should give *him* a helping hand, drunk, or sober; but it *warn't that* one glass of punch that upset him, sir; though I dare say it *was* strong enough to knock a better man down. No, no; he took *that 'un* to taste how he liked it, and then another *beckase* he liked how he tasted it; and then *follered* suit with the second 'un, sir, and no mistake, and——"

"Come, come, Taffey; if you would take a little of the spirit of charity, you would not be so extreme to mark what others do amiss; and to shew you that others can talk as well as *you*, I heard a report the other day about yourself which grieved me very much."

"About me, Sir? the Lord be good to us, as I hope to be saved, I have not touched a glass of *sperits* the last ten years come Martinmas."

"The report I allude to was not about spirits, but about water, Taffey."

"No, nor *sperits* and water neither! I'll be upon oath, Mr. Lethbridge, Sir," protested Taffey, indignantly.

"You mistake my meaning. I alluded to a report of your having yourself joined the Baptists."

"Lord love ye, Sir; what *will* they say next?" rejoined Taffey, with a comical smile, as he leisurely scratched the back of his head, and pushed his white-felt wide-awake more over his eyes; "I'll

tell you how that *war*, Sir: first of all, afore' you 'stablished the Baron's Court Sunday Evenings' Cricket Club, there wasn't never no sort of pleasure like for the poor, on the only day as we've got a spare hour; so I confess, as I used, Sir, occasionally look in to the different Methody chapels, which I assure you is as good as a play! And besides, I *argeed* in this way:—says I, Taffey Lloyd, you'll have to go *rayther* further nor your legs could carry you afore you could hear *worse* *praching* nor Mr. Jowl's; and you *may*, even at one of them 'ere Methody spiritual marine-stores, chance to pick up a few rags of better stuff, and a bottle that is not a vial of wrath; and moreover, Mr. Lethbridge, Sir, (put me right if I'm wrong,) I take it that a mouthful of prayers, like a mouthful of *wittuls*, never does a poor man any harm, let him pick it up where he will, for *reg'lar* prayers, like *reg'lar* meals, is often out of his power. Well, Sir, about a month agone, I hears of the great Baptist-dipping, as was to come off in the Dee; so I thought it would be a nice *devarshun* like for me and my old *ooman* to go to it. *Mester* Jenkins, Sir Gregory's steward, he lends us a nice fat mule out of the paddock, and a pillion, and Tamar and I sets out as *gran'* as any Duke and Duchess, with as much bread and cheese as a King or a *Quane* could eat, and we aways to the dippings. But Lor'! when we *gits* there you never see such a sight in

all your born days. There *war* a lot of men and women—old and young—fat and lean—all in long white night gowns, as if they was *raelly* and truly agoing to *slape* in the bed of the river; and there was *Muster* Dipdolt, assisted, as they calls it, by Brother Sousem, and Brother Damper, and Brother Splasher, and a lot more on 'em; and they takes these great hulking *fellers*, and *rô-bustshus* females in the long night-gowns, and they makes no more ado of sousing on 'em down over head and ears into the river than a *ooman* would of bathing a *babby*. But the best of this raree-show was, Sir, to see with what a *wengeance*-like the 'Brothers' took the old women—neck and crop—and seemed to ram 'em down into the water, as if they'd leave 'em there for good and all; while any of the '*sisters*' as was young and pretty they'd take 'em as gingerly as if they'd been snow figures, as if they feared a touch would break them to pieces, and *they* never disappeared, but you saw the white night gowns a-floating like water lilies a-top of the stream, and the '*brothers*' laid 'em down as gently on the grass arter as if they had been salmon trout *jist* caught. And that's the way as I *jined* the Baptists, Sir; and I ain't likely to *jine* them in no other way, for, as I says to my old ooman when I'd got her up behind me again, and we was on our way home, 'Tamar Lloyd,' says I, 'I've seen many a litter of poor blind puppies and kittens

drowned in the river, but it's the *first* time as ever I see such a lot of asses, with their eyes open, *throw'd* into it."

"True for you, Taffey Lloyd, says she; and whatever do they do with their rhumaticks? And did you see poor old Solomon Pan, how his teeth chattered, and how every limb shivered when Muster Dipdolt flumped him down upon the grass arter he *war* dipped?"

"Aye, aye, Tamar Lloyd, says I; poor old Solomon, he war a *dripping-pan* to the *bretheren*, and no mistake. And my Missus, she laughed, Sir, till I thought she might as well have been drowned as choked; and she said she never should call Solomon Pan anything but Muster Dipdolt's dripping-pan as long as she lived. And so you see, Sir, the foundation for a report is *ginrally* some decidedly *contrairy* thing to the truth on it, as it was all along of our going a pleasuring on Sancho, Sir Gregory's fat mule, as give rise to this here 'count of my having *jined* the Baptists."

"Well, I'm very glad it was only a report, Taffey," said Mr. Lethbridge; who could not help laughing at his graphic account of the Baptist-immersions; "but now promise me, like a good fellow, that you will not go telling people, as you have just told me, about Mr. Jowl's taking the punch at Mr. Dipdolt's, and the unhappy effect it had upon him; for recollect, it is not only on Mr. Jowl, but on all

his parishioners, that this accident reflects discredit."

"I'd be sorry to refuse to promise you anything as you could ax me, Sir," said Taffey, pulling his right ear so vigorously, that his design seemed to be, not only to make it as red as a cherry, but also to elongate it down to his shoulder; "but I can't promise you *that* neither, for I thinks when folks is so fond of setting about lies of others, it's only a just theng that summut of the truth should sometimes get about of them; and if that truth is bad enough to do for 'em, sarve 'em right, and if so be as *I* was judge and jury, I would'nt never give no other *vardict*."

"Aye, but Taffey, you are *not* either judge or jury; and your Bible has another teaching; it would be different if Mr. Jowl's misdeeds consisted in injuring, oppressing, or calumniating *you* personally; then, in self justification, you might be obliged to make known his misdeeds, for too much forbearance with regard to violent sins of aggression, is very like that 'consenting to a thief,' against which we are emphatically warned, by being told that he who does so is worse than the thief. But there is a wide difference between this and blazoning all our neighbours' defects and short comings; which remembrance of our own, ought to always prevent our doing; for if we have not *their* particular sin, depend upon it, we have some other of equal

weight, which in the eye of GOD, may be worse ; and even plenty of small change for their besetting sin, which we are so prone to condemn."

" Well, sartin sure, Sir,—but it's more *convarting* like, to be chastised by you, than to hear a whole bushel of *sarmonts* stuffed chuck^r full of *Mosses* and hell-fire, *preached* by Mr. Jowl ; but I don't think, Sir, as he have any what you call besetting sin ; for on the *contrairy*, he is beset with sins, and the mountain on top of 'em is hypocrisy. *However*, as he is so fond of damnation, it's to be hoped, with the blessing of GOD, as all hypocrites will be d—d, and as they travels by the Belzibub line, and no mistake, that they will be sent in a *just* class curse, back to their father, the devil, and that's all the harm as *I* wishes 'em, Sir."

Mr. Lethbridge could not help laughing both at Taffey's theology and his *forbearance*, but, shaking his head at him, he said, as he walked on, " Oh, Taffey ! Taffey ! you and I must have some private conversation on these matters ; so come over to me on Saturday morning between ten and eleven."

" Thank you, Sir ; I'm much beholden to you, I won't fail. Your sarvant Ma'am ; your sarvant, Sir."

And Taffey went his way, as they continued theirs.

" Upon my word," laughed Mary Penrhyn, " I'm very much of Taffey Lloyd's opinion, that

it is a very good thing that the Hundred of Baron's Court should *see* as well as hear a few truths about the Rev. Jabez Jowl."

"I cannot allow such uncharitable words to pass your lips," said he, kissing them away. And a few minutes more brought them to Mrs. Lewyn's gate.

CHAPTER V.

showing that good singing may be heard even in a Village.—Mrs. Tempa's Album: a collection of precious Danks, which prove that it all is not Gold that glitters, neither does Gold always glitter.



EN-Y-COED was a small, two-storied, gable-end cottage, embowered in ivy; with latticed windows, with lozenge-shaped panes. Immediately under the library and dining-room windows was a parterre of choice flowers, with a vast variety of standard rose-trees, and an old fashioned sun-dial in the midst of them; then, from the lodge-gate, running parallel with one side of the house, was a wide well-gravelled carriage

road, leading through to another road and another lodge, each entrance being shaded by some patriarchal elms and horse-chestnuts; and on one side of this drive, partitioned off with iron palings, was a large meadow in which cows and sheep were grazing; while on the other side, at the back of the house, before coming to the large well-stocked fruit-garden, which was enclosed with high walls, and was about a quarter of a mile from the house, there was a rookery; and though the sun was now rapidly disappearing the crows were still clamorously telling the woods and fields, and to the deepening twilight their Methuselah legends.

Charley, who was sitting in the window, seeing Mrs. Penrhyn and Mr. Lethbridge coming up the avenue, ran out to meet them with Fluff in his arms, the snowy uniformity of the latter's head being intersected with postage stamps which were continued down his back.

"Why, Charley," laughed Mr. Lethbridge, "what have you been making Fluff, not a Post-Captain but a Post-Catskin for?"

"Oh, he's been so naughty; he very nearly killed one of Mrs. Lewyn's canaries; and so, to punish him, I'm going to put him in the post as we go home, and send him to Miss Prosser, for he is only fit to live with old tabbies," said Charley in a loud and angry voice, talking *at* Fluff. And then added, "stoop down, Mr. Lethbridge, I want to

‘whisper you. I don’t *really* mean to send Fluff away to old Prosser’s, but I’ve put the postage stamps all over him to frighten him, and make him *think* I do; so mind you make him think so too.”

“Oh, Fluff, Fluff! I’m ashamed of you,” cried he, immediately entering into Charley’s plot, to the great delight of the latter; “to think that a cat of your hitherto immaculate coat and conduct, should ever have been beguiled into thinking that a bird in the paw was worth two in the cage, and so have converted yourself from the first of felines into a Post Meridian Grimalkin. Fie! fie! On every house-top, and in every gutter you will henceforward be shunned as a ticket-of-leave cat.”

“May-hew,” said Fluff in reply to this exordium, as Charley, laughing and in great glee, bounded on before them into the house, with his pre-paid favourite in his arms—further lecturing him by pointing out to him, as a model of unerring propriety, his canine colleague, the sleek and silvery Swiftpaws, who was stretched out on the rug before the fire—the very incarnation of courtesy and comfort—abandoning ears, feet, and tail to every insidious invasion, without either resistance or retaliation.

May was sitting on the sofa beside Mrs. Lewyn, and Linda was looking over an album of drawings

and water-colors with rather a supercilious expression of face.

Their mutual greetings over, Mr. Lethbridge took up a book that was lying open on the table, saying—

“What have you got here, Mrs. Lewyn? is it good? for I really long for a good novel, which is neither a tissue of unnatural vulgarities nor bare-faced plagiaries through which are conveyed pompous and cold-blooded immoralities.”

“What is it?” rejoined she.

“Lady Lee’s Widowhood.”

“Oh! excellent! the best novel I have read a long time—clever, exceedingly interesting, equally natural; for, like Thackeray’s novels, it describes society as it is, and people as they are, and is not an *appliquée* of the refuse of a Marine-store shop at St. Giles’s, (or Bleedingheart Court, wherever that is) on improbable incidents and impossible events. In ‘Lady Lee’s Widowhood’ there is not a dull page, and the author is much happier in drawing female characters than men generally are, with the exception of Lady Lee herself, who, though we are *told* she is exceedingly clever, gives no single evidence of it; for from first to last she is as complete a nullity as most men conceive that a model woman should be. Another great charm of this book is, that there are none of the chartered

vulgarisms of modern *il*-literature in it—or at least, only ONE—which is a rather frequent use of that very vulgar Carlylean expression of ‘the like ;’ but despite this one small speck in the sun, the book is charming to the very end, and the *dénouement* naturally brought about ; and I maintain that the incident at the christening, where we are told that the tear that dropped from poor Josiah’s eye on the cheek of Hester’s child, was the first drop of holy water that touched it, has more real pathos in it than all the wire-drawn sentimentalities of that last century *vau rien*, Lawrence Sterne, and indisputably ten thousand times more than all the pompously draped sensualities of his resurrectionist in the present day. In short, what I like in this book is that without any of the foot-light tinsel and theatrical frippery of fine sentiments, the author seems to have a healthy and clearly defined idea of the length and depth of the gulf which exists between right and wrong.”

“From your account I shall certainly read it,” said Mr. Lethbridge ; “for *any* thing either healthy or genuine, even in a book, is a relief to one in this age of solemn, and all other shams.”

“Do you not think,” said Mrs. Lewyn, “that this *universal* sham—which is the registered wrap-rascal of all private and public affairs—arises from *words* in the present day—even when they are evident lies,

and palpable perjuries—being considered everything, and actions nothing?”

“Of course I do; and it is precisely on this account, that if the most damning *facts* are proved against a peer, or a gentleman(?) in a court of justice, he has only to perjure himself by a summary denial of the whole, to be quite as well received in our *moral* society, if not better, and at our “moral Court,” as if no such awkward little pieces of secret history had ever transpired. It is for this reason too, that in our much vaunted courts of justice, a murderer’s counsel, though in full possession of the prisoner’s confession of his guilt, impiously and blasphemously calls GOD to witness that *he* believes the prisoner at the bar innocent; or asseverates that in his conscience he does so; and that upon the *words* which go to constructing these sacrilegious perjuries, a sapient jury, nine times out of ten, acquit some complex villain, who has been *proved* such by the strongest *facts*, because the vapour-breath of a bold perjured assertion is deemed sufficient in the inverse and much-warped Brummagem charity(?) of the present day, to outweigh them. And it is for this reason also, with the addition of a little peerage-worship which is *the* great distinguishing national type of the Anglo-Saxonas, the flat nose is of the Calmuc, that the late Duke of Wellington, though he had

passed his life in breaking the seventh commandment, till age reminded him that Death's dark legion had still to be led—that the Styx had still to be crossed—and that victory might not be quite so sure on the other side, as it was at the Douro and Guadalquiver, that he regularly attended heavenly parade at eight every morning in the Chapel Royal, which caused many of our clergy, whose consciences were apparently made of the same elastic material as that of counsel's for defendants in criminal prosecutions, to proclaim his Grace in the funeral sermons they preached on his demise, 'a man after GOD's own heart.' Now this certainly must have arisen from a confusion, or rather, a transposition of cause and effect in the Sternhold-and-Hopkin's edition of the History of King David. But again, behold the omnipotence of *words* ! For our being in our every act and thought *the* most tuft-hunting, mammon-worshipping and servile people under the sun to all the powers that be, or even to the faintest shadows of those powers, does not prevent our vaunting our independence, nationally and individually, on all occasions; till, because we are bearish in manner and morose in spirit, where the lenitive electuary of self-interest does not intervene, we have ended by assuming as an incontrovertible fact, that we *are* an independent people; whereas, in reality we are press-ridden, peer-ridden, court-ridden, cant-ridden,

and above all, purse-ridden ; all which hippomacy effectually tramples down our moral courage, that ‘great first cause,’ and best bulwark of all real independence. M. Barthélemy Hauréau in his ‘François Premier et sa Cour,’ says—

‘Le noble Anglais est égoïste et sombre ; l’ivresse même (et souvent il s’enivre(?)) ne le rend ni plus généreux, ni plus gai. Si d’ailleurs, il ne parle pas de ses antiques privilèges, avec la jactance de l’Espagnol, il n’y tient pas moins ; son esprit morose a le goût de l’indépendance.’ Now this is perfectly true, with the exception of the inebriety which was *literally* and almost universally the case, up to the days of Pitt and Fox, and, if less general now, is by no means totally exploded. *Au reste*, Monsieur Hauréau is right ; nous avons ‘le goût de l’indépendance,’ and we mistake the taste for this virtue, for its possession.”

“I quite agree with you and with him,” said Mrs. Lewyn ; “but, indeed, independence is not the *only* virtue which *talking* about makes us fancy we possess.”

“Yea, verily. We are a nation of imitators without individuality ; and Martial’s—

‘Nemo suos (hæc est aulæ natura potentis)
Sed domini mores Cæsarianus habet,’

seems to have been written with a prophetic view to England. But what treasures are you keeping there all to yourself, Miss Linda?” added Mr.

Lethbridge, walking to the back of her chair, and looking over her shoulder into the album.

"I don't think you'll call them such when you look at them," said Linda, who drew remarkably well herself; "indeed, I wonder Mrs. Lewyn should have honored the most of them with a place in this magnificently bound book."

"Linda!" said Mrs. Penrhyn, frowning at her, "if you will always form hasty opinions, you should either refrain from expressing them, or do so less rudely."

Linda colored, and looked as much as to say:—"Well, but surely drawings *must* be judged by their appearances," but she said nothing; and Mrs. Lewyn, either not hearing, or affecting not to hear, turned to her sister, and laying her hand on hers, said—

"May, dearest May, I have a *great* favor to ask you, if it will not fatigue you too much?"

"Nothing that I can do for you, dear Mrs. Lewyn, or that will afford you any pleasure will fatigue me; so pray let me know what it is, and make me happy by thinking that there *is* anything that I *can* do for you," replied May.

"Well, it is to sing me something; for it is so long since I have heard that sweet—sweet voice of yours, May."

"Oh! is that all?" said May, smiling, as she

instantly rose from the sofa ; I was in hopes it was something a little more difficult."

Mr. Lethbridge preceded her to the piano and opened it, after which he arranged the music stool, asking her if it was high enough.

"Thanks ; it will do very well."

"Stop, May !" cried Charley, getting down off of the chair upon which he had been perched looking at the drawings with Linda, and hugging the much-put-upon Fluff still in his arms ; "stop, don't begin till I come ; and so saying, and calling Swiftpaws over from his cosey quarters before the fire, they all three took up their quarters under the piano ; and May, after a slight prelude sang, in a most touching voice, that exquisite ballad of John Parry's—

"LONG TIME AGO."

By the lake where droop'd the willow—
Long time ago ;
Where the rock throws back the billow—
Whiter than snow ;
Dwelt a maid, beloved and cherished
By high and low ;
But with Autumn's leaf she perished—
Long time ago.

Mingled were our hearts for ever—
Long time ago ;
Can I e'er forget her ?—never !
No—lost one—no !
To her grave these tears are given—

Ever to flow,
She's the star I missed from Heaven—
Long time ago.

When May's voice had ceased to vibrate through the last thrilling plaintive cadence of this most lovely air, no murmur of applause ensued, but an ill-suppressed sob escaped from her four auditors, while Charley, with that cruel proclaiming of sad thoughts, peculiar to children, flinging Fluff down as unceremoniously as if he had been a ball, sprang into her lap, and throwing his arms round her neck, said eagerly, opening his eyes to their widest extent, as he peered into her face—

“But it's *not your* grave, May?—say it isn't—it's only the girl's in the song—isn't it?”

“Yes,” said she, kissing him; “it was as I have just told you—‘long time ago;’—besides, you know, Charley, I'm not a star, that *I* should be missed from Heaven.”

“No, you are not,” rejoined Charley, thoughtfully, “but if you *were*, and were to fall out of it, as I have seen stars do of a summer's night, I'm sure *I* should miss you, indeed I should May, even if it was as full—as full—oh, but as full of other stars, as the Burnley meadows are full of kingcups.”

“Thank you, darling,” said May, kissing his eyes, lips and forehead, as she put back his thick waving hair; “then I must take care when I *do* get among the stars, not to lose my place.” But perceiving

that there were nothing but silent tears stealing all around her, she walked over to Mr. Lethbridge, and said with a joyous laugh, as she laid her hand upon his wrist—

“Now traitor, I’ve caught you; and do you suppose that your high crimes and misdemeanours in so long and so frequently neglecting me and my Hebrew, shall go unpunished: if you do, you never were more mistaken; and so now, I am about to take signal vengeance on you.”

She paused for a moment looking laughingly into his eyes; whereupon, assuming the same high-flown strain, he raised her hand to his lips, and said—

“Most sovereign lady, in all humility your slave awaits his just sentence at your hands.”

“It is then, that you forthwith return to the place from whence *I* came, and there remain till you have sung us a song, which, in commutation of your sentence, we will graciously allow you to select for yourself.”

“Ah, naughty Mr. Lethbridge! and sly as naughty, since it seems that you can sing, too, as well as do everything else, though you have so artfully concealed the fact from all but our dear May Queen,” said Mrs. Lewyn.

“Only” rejoined he, folding his hands together, as if about to pray, and demurely shaking his head, “as much as is commanded to be sung or said in churches.”

“Not true,” exclaimed May, “for instead of correcting and perusing my far more interesting Hebrew exercises, I have more than once surprised the man *Chopinising* on my piano, that is, evoking the most weird and wizardish, unearthly voluntaries, and then suddenly lifting up his voice to give utterance to the pretty love-gauds and soft summer-air and silver-rivered sighs, sighed long ago by Lord Surrey, John Bamfylde, Sir William Davenant, and Drummond of Hawthornden.”

“Now, Mr. Lethbridge, you are fairly caught,” cried Mrs. Lewyn.

“Rather say unfairly, for this is rank treachery.”

“Fair, or not fair, you *must* sing now that we know that you can do so.”

“At all events it ought to be put to the vote, for every one ought not to suffer for your, and Miss Egerton’s malice.”

“Oh yes, pray do, Mr. Lethbridge,” cried Linda, while Charley began towing him towards the piano by the tails of his coat. Mary Penrhyn *said* nothing; but she raised her eyes to his, and apparently the look was fiatical; for he instantly obeyed it, and went to the instrument. His touch was a masterly one, and, as May expressed it, he began *Chopinising* over the keys, and drew from them such sweet, low, minor, shadowy, twilight sort of harmonies, that they seemed, like the voiceless music of a dream, to steep the spirit and thrill the

heart with the undefinable spell of their whispered mysteries. At length, with the most natural transition in the world, to more earthly, though not less entrancing strains, he sang those charming old words of Wotton's, on the Queen of Bohemia, in a voice so rich, so mellow, and so flexible, that as the notes rolled out, and blent into each other, they seemed like some rich balm expressed from many flowers, and filtered through a soft summer-air into the heart.

I.

" You meaner beauties of the night
That poorly satisfie our eyes,
More by your number than your light,—
You common people of the skies,
What are you when the sun shall rise ?

II.

You curious chaunters of the wood
That warble forth Dame Nature's layes,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents—what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise ?

III.

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own—
What are you when the rose is blown ?

IV.

So, when my mistress shall be seen,
In sweetness of her looks and mind,
By virtue first, then choice a queen—
Tell me if she were not design'd
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind ? "

“Charming, charming! Thank you a thousand times. Now only *one* more, and then you shall have a respite till after tea,” said Mrs. Lewyn.

And without any more pressing, Mr. Lethbridge sang “Angeol d’Amor,” as only Mario could have sang it beside himself, even to that wonderful high note at the end, which always makes one feel as if one’s listening soul had, indeed, reached Heaven. It was something terrible to fall from such beatitudes adown the prosaic precipice of cups and spoons; but the servant at that moment brought in tea, and of the whole party Charley was the only one who could, with any degree of complacency, listen to the silver sounds, the metallic singing of the hissing bubbling kettle, or think that the plum, and other cakes *might* be compared with the sweetness they had just heard, and yet not suffer by the comparison.

“What a pity,” exclaimed Mrs. Lewyn as she handed the young curate his tea, while he was assiduously handing the cream and sugar to Mrs. Penrhyn, and receiving, nothing loth, the silent homage of her admiration; “What a pity that such a voice should be wasted in a village!”

“’Pon my word,” laughed he, “it is not very flattering to be considered a voice and nothing more, for you don’t seem to have any compassion for the exiled spirit of the man.”

“No, indeed,” smiled she, as she made a sort of

circular bow round the table, "when I look at the society you are in, I don't think there is much room for pity."

"Well I rather agree with you Mrs. Lewyn; and only that I am eating bread and butter, and, therefore, don't want to run the risk of being confounded with that most ridiculous of all creations—real or imaginary—Herr Werter, I should certainly say something pretty on the occasion, or at least endeavour to do so."

"Pray don't, for you never can say anything half as pretty as you can sing; so we will take out the compliment you *should* have paid us, in another song by and bye. But, jesting apart, as you cannot always have the felicity of being in the present company, I really do think, considering how much you have to bring into a higher and wider sphere, that you have something very like super-human merit to be content with this low and narrow one."

"Don't you know, my dear Mrs Lewyn, that no sphere that GOD allots us is either low or narrow, since it becomes the orbit of our own soul—and the star it is, that illumines and notifies the space, not the space the star. Then for every-day use, as old Wilbye has told us from his Hybla of world-culled wisdom—

'There is a jewel which no Indian mine can buy,
No chemic art can count'feit;

It makes men rich in greatest poverty,
 Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold,
 The homely whistle to sweet music's strain;
 Seldom it comes, to few from Heaven sent,
 That much in little—a'l in naught—*Content.*'

And if," added he, glancing almost imperceptibly at Mary Penrhyn, "we have every reason to be content with what we have found, then, indeed, have we found *Content.*"

"I shall have no chance with you at paradoxes; so let us leave them and talk parish, which is more adapted to my capacity. What do you think of Mr. Jowl's clever expedient, now that Church-rates are abolished?—in every other Sunday getting up a collection for apochryphal repairs in the church, or augmentations to the beadle, or the belfry; or for vestry-meetings to discuss the feasibility of abolishing mildew and church mice, or some other equally palpable and important measures?"

"Now really," laughed Mr. Lethbridge, "I should not have paid my respects to you this evening had I known that you intended to get up charades."

"Charades!" echoed Mrs. Lewyn—

"Yes; for do you not mean it for a charade of Tantalus, to convene such a party in this

"Darling room so soft and white;"

conjure up such tea, such cream, such cakes, and then suddenly destroy our zest for all and each by treacherously introducing Mr. Jowl and his

parochial screw-propeller? Do pray let us forget the parish, now that we have got into your charming grounds. Charley, old fellow, what are *you* thinking of, you look so very serious."

"I was thinking," said Charley, as he assiduously waded through a great wedge of plum cake, "how much better it would be if there was no bread, only cake in the world; now wouldn't it?"

"I'm by no means sure that it *would* be an improvement to the present state of things. Now, for instance, how should you like to eat plum-cake with roast mutton?"

"I think I *should*," rejoined Charley, approvingly discussing another piece of the cake, with his head on one side, the better to contemplate the bit that still remained in his hand.

"Oh, very well, you shall have some with your dinner to-morrow, Charley," said Mrs. Penrhyn.

"No, no!" cried that young gentleman resolutely, and even laying down the *débris* of the cake which he still held, "for if *you* say I may have it, I know it will be something that I sha'n't like, as you always play me those sort of tricks; just as you did when I wanted to see how Jenkins's new mouse-trap was made, and you let my finger be caught in it."

"I always let you buy your own experience certainly, Charley, for two reasons: first, because it is

the only experience that is worth anything; and next, because it is the shortest, though the roughest, road to all knowledge."

"Ah! but you don't do so to May and Linda. You always tell them beforehand, that things will hurt them, or be nasty, or whatever it is."

"That is because they are content to *believe* what I tell them; but *you* are a little St. Thomas, Charley, and have no faith in anything but your own eyes and fingers."

"Certainly," laughed Mr. Lethbridge, "there is a great deal of analytic chymistry in Charley's researches. He is a perfect Herapath at ferreting out even the fifty-thousandth particle of a grain of mischief, wherever it exists."

"Ah! well, you may laugh at me," said Charley, sliding off of his chair, and standing up, doubtless on the principle of the over-crammed boy, who thought he *could* eat a *leetle* more if he stood up; "but when I'm big I'll write a book."

"What a vindictive young rascal you must be, Charley, to threaten us with anything so dreadful! and what is your book to be about?" said Mr. Lethbridge.

"Oh! about the Doatskinry and Darlingry of dogs," said he, throwing his arms about Swiftpaw's neck. "But do *you* know any stories about lions, and crocodiles, and eagles, and owls, and seals, and monkeys, and things? And did you ever eat with

them, and lie down with them, like the man that came with the big show to Mold last month; and did they ever roar and scream at you like a thunder-storm, as they did at him? Did they, Mr. Lethbridge?"

"Alas! no, friend Charley, I never did:

'Whate'er I've seen, required no witch's storm—
Slight deeds that nature could with ease perform.
Audacious to purloin my flesh and fish,
No golden eagles hopp'd into my dish;
Nor crocodiles, by love of knowledge led
To mark my figure, left their oozy bed;
Nor loaded camels, to provoke my stare,
Sublimely whirl'd like straws amid the air;
Nor, happy in a stomach made of steel,
On roaring lions have *I* made a meal.'"

They all laughed, and so, of course, Charley laughed, too.

"No," said Mrs. Penrhyn, "I should think, in these degenerate days, Mr. Twitcher was the only Bruce reserved for such exploits!"

"Has he yet published that ridiculous book of his that Miss Kempenfelt called '*Man in Petticoats*'?" asked Mrs. Lewyn.

"How can you prove yourself one of the profane vulgar, by thus evincing your ignorance?" said Mr. Lethbridge. "For not only has he published *that* invaluable work, but he has got into Parliament, been to Scotland, and written—or rather, is writing—an historical novel, which he

modestly says is far superior to any of Scott's—the subject being John Knox's Night-Cap, and the style no doubt suitably somnolent; but, as it seems he was not *appreciated* more in Scotland than he is here, he hates and abuses the Scotch with a fifty-Samuel-Johnson power; and I verily believe, that as Peter Pindar wrote of the Doctor, we may with truth say of the Twitcher, that he—

‘ — Saw the too kind North with jaundic'd eyes,
And rode to Hawthornden's fair scene by night,
For fear a Scottish tree might wound his sight;
And bent from decent candour to depart,
Allows a Scotchman neither head nor heart.
Grant fiction half thy volumes of surprise,
High in the scale of merit shalt thou rise.
Still to Fame's temple dost thou boast pretension,
For thine the *rara avis* of invention!
And lo! amid thy work of lab'ring years,
A dignity of egotism appears—
A style that classic authors should pursue—
A style that peerless Katterfelto knew!
Thou dear man-mountain of discovery, run,
And make for *Baron's Court* some future fun.' ”

“A very good ‘abstract and brief chronicle’ of Mr. Twitcher, truly,” laughed Mrs. Lewyn.

“I see,” said Mary Penrhyn, with a look of such concrete affection that even *he* could not desire more, “that you, Mr. Lethbridge, are as fond of Peter Pindar as my poor Harcourt is.”

“Yes; I am a great admirer of his—more even of the anti-humbug of his nature, and its anta-

gonistic principle to all servility, than of his talent."

Here the servant came to say that the car was come.

"Robert," said Mrs. Lewyn, as the man was about to close the door, "ask Sir Gregory's coachman if he thinks he could take the white peacock I promised Miss Kempenfelt, to night. If not, Giles must take it over to Baron's Court in the morning; but I think it might go in a game-basket on the box."

"Good night, dear Mrs. Lewyn," said May and Linda, kissing the kind old lady; "and thank you for a most delightful day."

"It has been such to me, my dear children, I assure you; but if you really found it so, I hope you will convince me that you did, by coming soon again."

"Oh! I should like to come every day," said Charley.

"What! and leave grandpapa and all of us at Baron's Court? Thank you, Charley," said Mrs. Penrhyn.

"Oh, no! not leave grandpapa and all of *you*; only Aunt Charity and the lessons."

"And pray," laughed Mr. Lethbridge, "*which* of the lessons do you class Aunt Charity with?"

"Oh! the spelling lessons, because they are the most tiresome of all," said her undutiful nephew,

as he held back his head to let Mrs. Lewyn's maid tie a handkerchief round his throat. It was very wrong, but a general laugh followed this speech, in which Charley immediately joined, not having been aware till then that he had said a good thing.

Mrs. Penrhyn having now hermetically muffled up May, they all took leave of their kind hostess, who accompanied them to the hall door. It was a lovely moon-light night; so that two of the party at least, regretted that they could not walk home. No sooner had they driven through the lodge than, upon May's remarking what a dear old lady Mrs. Lewyn was,—“She is indeed,” replied Mrs. Penrhyn; “and therefore, Linda, I was both shocked and grieved at your ill-bred remark about the drawings in her album.”

“Well, but, dear, they *were*, for the most part, shocking daubs; and besides, they were not *her* drawings—only bought things—or of course I should not have said what I did.”

“These daubs, as you call them, not only cost more, but all things considered, are far more precious than many artistic *chef d'œuvres*.”

“Cost more!” echoed Linda, in astonishment.

“Yes; those daubs have given bread to many children, and rescued their parents from misery or crime. Some of them have cost as much as two and three hundred pounds each, under the pretext

of encouraging drawing talent. Mrs. Lewyn contrives to rescue her fellow-creatures from the abyss of want, without humiliating them by bestowing alms; and so invests large sums in the purchase of such daubs, affecting to have taken a violent fancy to them, and where she stumbles upon any work of real genius, she gets it sold at some London auction, that it may bring more than she could afford to give. And though she has everything about her like a gentlewoman, you see how very shabbily she dresses—one of her maxims being, that the price of a silk dress would clothe half a dozen poor children.”

“How like grandpapa! Is it not?” said Linda. “But,” added she, as her eyes filled with tears, “I shall never again open that album of Mrs. Lewyn’s but with as much reverence as if it were a book of prayers.”

“And so it is,” said Mr. Lethbridge, “of the highest and most acceptable sort;—that is,—of *prayers realized*; for the Creator, like His creatures, testst he sincerity of words by deeds. The infernal regions are said to be paved with good *intentions*, from whence we may conclude that Heaven is domed with good *actions*. But what is so truly admirable in Mrs. Lewyn is her perfect Scriptural Samaritanism, *literally* not letting her left hand know what her right does. There is no ostentation—no *even parochial publicity*—no making herself fussy and

feared at National schools—no running after the church bell rather than the church book—no confounding of solemnity with sanctity—no substituting the modern *text* and *soup-ticket* for the aboriginal oil and two-pence, and, above all, no Missionary MEZUZOTHS* at her door-posts to let all the world know the piety that dwells within. In a word, she *does* her duty *in* that state of life unto which it has pleased GOD to call her, and is not for ever seeking occasions to trumpet herself out of it."

"She has indeed," said Mary Penrhyn, "in *every way* chosen the better part."

"Here we are at Baron's Court. As it wants a quarter to ten," said Mr. Lethbridge, looking at his watch, "I should not think Sir Gregory will

* This name was given by the Jews to certain pieces of parchment that they fixed in the door-posts of their houses, according to Deut. vi. 9, and xi. 13; where, that they should not forget the laws of GOD, it is said, "Thou shalt write them on the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." To fulfil this command literally, and to avoid the scoffs and profanations of the wicked, the Rabbis taught that they ought at least to write it on parchment, and to enclose it in something; wherefore they wrote it upon a square piece of parchment prepared on purpose, with a particular sort of ink, and in a square kind of character (Deut. vi. 4, 5. 6, &c.) "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our GOD is one LORD," &c. Then they left a little space, and afterwards went on (Deut. xi. 13) "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently to my commandments," &c., as far as "thou shalt write them," &c. After this they rolled up the parchment and put it into a case, and wrote on the end of it SHADAI, which is one of the names of GOD. They put it at the doors of their houses, chambers, and all places most frequented; they fixed it to the knockers of their doors, on the right side, and every time they went in and out they touched it with the end of one of their fingers, which they afterwards kissed devoutly.

be gone to bed ; and I want to speak to him before I go home."

"Will you not sleep here to-night?" asked May ; "you know ' MR. LETHBRIDGE'S ROOM ' is one of *the* rooms of Baron's Court."

"I know from long experience, that hospitality, kindness, and every other virtue reigns, at Baron's Court ; but I cannot avail myself of them any more this evening, as business awaits me at home ; so I will wish you good night here," said he, shaking hands with them all in the hall, and adding a low and fervent "God bless you," over the last hand he pressed. And then, having ascertained from Gifford that Sir Gregory was up and alone, he followed him to the library.

CHAPTER VI.

*The Electric Telegraph Letter.—The Cloud with
a silver Lining.—The Heart with a golden
one.—A last Good Night!*



WHEN Gifford threw open the library-door, and announced Mr. Lethbridge, the latter perceived Sir Gregory leaning on his elbow, buried in thought, with evident and strong traces of distress on his countenance, and his right hand resting on a letter that was open on the table before him. Mr. Lethbridge drew back, saying, "I fear I interrupt you; I will call to-morrow morning."

"No, no; pray come in! On the contrary, I'm glad you have come, Lethbridge, for there are times, that perhaps it is better for one not to be alone."

The curate looked at him kindly and inquiringly,

and yet hesitated for some seconds before he ventured to give utterance to his sympathy and anxiety. At length he said—

“There are persons, my dear Sir Gregory, who, from never having any solitary enjoyments, have no right to have solitary sorrows; and you are one of them. I fear, nay, I am almost certain, that since I left you after dinner, something has occurred to distress you; and while, from having no right to pry into your affairs, I shrink from doing so, yet, in common with all who have the privilege of knowing you, I feel that I *have* a right—if the sincerest friendship and esteem can give one—to share your affections. Resent my obtrusiveness if you will, but don’t, *pray don’t*, refuse to answer my appeal.”

The old man grasped the young man’s hand, and pressed it cordially within his own, while as he arose and walked towards the mantel-piece, he passed his own hand over his eyes.

“*Cui bono?* Lethbridge, what must be, will be,” sighed he, and then added, after a short pause,—“And yet, there’s no one of whose judgment I have a higher opinion than of yours; or whose advice I would rather take, or be decided by, when ‘halting between two opinions;’ and I am at this moment, I candidly confess to you, in a perfect *chevaux-de-frise* of dilemmas. I know and feel, that in yielding, I am walking delibe-

rately into the snare of a villain, and yet that if I refuse, being completely at his mercy, he can and will, not only spring a mine under *me*, but *mine*."

The young curate seated himself in an easy chair beside the fire, knowing that his agitated companion would intuitively follow his example and take the opposite one, (which he did); and having deposited his hat and cane on the table, he said—

"Now, my dear Sir Gregory, let us see what can be done, by holding a Mouse-and-Lion council. Knowing that there is only *one* villain in the world in whose [power you can possibly be, I take it for granted that you have received some fresh annoyance, touching the mortgage on Baron's Court, from that vulgar *parvenu*, Sir Titaniferous Thompson? And even before I know what it is, my unhesitating and uncompromising advice to you is, on *no* account yield to any fresh extortion of his."

Sir Gregory shook his head. "The worst of it is, Lethbridge, that I have been in the habit of yielding to these extortions, not so much from any culpable weakness, as from the intention of lessening the amount of the capital; therefore, whenever I could by possibility scrape any monies over and above the stipulated periodical instalments, I have always made them over to him. Now this evening's post brings me a letter from the shark,

saying that he has had very heavy losses and disbursements, and that if I can, before the end of the month, let him have £4,000 in *advance*, instead of foreclosing the mortgage next year, when it expires, he will give me eighteen months' more law."

"On no account accede to this, my dear Sir Gregory," said his young adviser, plunging the poker with as much vengeance into the midst of a large block of coal emitting innumerable jets of gas, and shivering it to fragments with as much unerring skill as if the poker had been a foil, and the coal the *parvenu* baronet, whom he was running through the body.

"I cannot—or at least I cannot without further sacrifices, which, for the sake of those poor darling children, I should be very unwilling to make, for there is no use in stripping the place and so preserving an empty shell for them, from which that vulgar sharper has extracted the kernel. And yet, on the other hand, if I do not, I know the wretch I have to deal with *well*—he will pounce upon us to the day—to the hour—nay, to the very minute; and were there nothing left but those poor orphans' bones, those would he grind down in true ogre style 'to make his bread.'"

"My dear Sir Gregory, a year, in the weaving of events, is an eternity; for Omnipotence only requires minutes to will, or to dissolve, worlds—to make or unmake destinies. *Wait* till the year

comes round, and *then* pay off what remains of this mortgage."

"But what if I can't? The residue is nine thousand five hundred pounds; and, like Lear, 'I am old, now,' and therefore have no one to turn to for help. Kindred and friends the grave has long since closed upon, and, at my age, who wants either, must seek them there."

"With regard to kindred, it is the natural course of things that it should be so," said the curate, his eyes glistening with more than their usual brightness; "but hearts, my dear Sir Gregory, are GOD's meadows. Some, it is true, like the green ones of the outer world, are barren and unproductive enough, from want of the sunlight of a genial nature and the sympathetic irrigations of a Christian one; but when they *are* rich and fertile, like yours, for instance, their crops are troops of friends; and, though like the sweet clover of the fields, these may be, and are, mowed down by the inevitable scythe, it is only to be succeeded by fresh ones—at least *not inferior* to their predecessors. *This is my conviction*; and I am almost selfish enough to rejoice even in a misfortune to you, which affords me an opportunity of convincing you that this conviction is no idle theory."

"My dear Lethbridge," said Sir Gregory, holding out his hand to him, "I knew I could calculate on your sympathy and your counsel; and, believe

me, I do not underrate either. And proudly and gratefully do I both acknowledge and accept, and I hope I need not add, reciprocate your friendship. But when I talked of having no friends, the term was an erroneous one; I merely meant, I had no contemporary ones to whom I could *now* apply, nor from whom I could accept pecuniary assistance."

"Neither did I, my dear Sir Gregory," said the young man, cordially returning the pressure of his hand, "mean, when I spoke of friends, to offer you in your embarrassment the arid glebe of a curate's friendship. Thank GOD, I am now in a position to prove to you (though, compared with what I owe you, but very slightly) the sincerity of my gratitude, and the unbounded esteem I entertain for you; and I can with truth affirm, that *this* is not only the *first*, but the *sole* pleasure (as yet,) which this new page of life has given me."

Seeing that his companion looked mystified and inquiringly, he added, taking the electric-telegraph letter out of his pocket—"My reason for intruding on you to-night was to tell you that this despatch, which I got at dinner to day, was to let me know that poor Lord Aronly, whom I do not pretend to regret, as I had never seen him, died of apoplexy this morning."

"My dear fellow! I congratulate you with all my heart."

"No, not with *all* your heart. Pray, my dear Sir Gregory, don't waste anything so precious on what is comparatively of so little value; for I want the *whole* of your good, kind, heart, to wish me joy on another subject, which is far nearer mine."

Again Sir Gregory looked up inquiringly.

"The fact is, to-day has been the day of my destiny; not for having put me in possession of a coronet and the broad lands of Glenomera Castle, but for having given me the heart of the most charming, the most noble, and the most loveable woman that ever existed. You may indeed *now* congratulate me with all your heart, aye, and your soul too, my dear Sir Gregory, for I'm going to be married."

"Going to be married!" echoed Sir Gregory, and, putting on a comical expression of countenance and pulling his under lip, he added—"My congratulations must entirely depend upon who the lady is. Do I know her?"

"Yes."

"Well, or slightly?"

"Intimately."

"Humph! I always, in conjectures, as in arguments, like to dispose of the negatives first, which pioneer the way as it were, to the positives. Therefore, I suppose I may safely assert, without fear of contradiction, that it is *not* my sister Charity."

"No," laughed the bridegroom elect, though it

is some one very like *a* Sister of Charity, as far as angelic goodness and a total abnegation of self goes, with an extensive knowledge of *how* to be useful, as well as a boundless wish to be so."

"GOD bless me! Not marked with the small pox—blind of an eye—a *nose* 'like Mars, to threaten and command!' and inclined to prove to the world that moustaches are epicene, I hope?"

"No, on the contrary; manners of the most enthralling gentleness, with what would be the beauty of an angel—if she had not something better—that of a woman."

"Oh! 'vanity of vanities!' Listen to the profane idolater. Is it because the peer has begun that the parson is to end; or, as Mr. Jowl would *anathematically* express it, have you indeed forsaken the LORD, and made to yourself idols of clay?"

"No; no idolatry, either in the singular or plural, but only a most holy sanctuary, wherein to keep my true faith for ever."

"Where? and who can it be?" mused Sir Gregory, and—remembering Mary Penrhyn's oft-repeated warning—for a moment May flashed across his mind; but the next the idea faded from it, and he sighed deeply as he thought how she was fading, too. Besides, had it been her, the curate would scarcely have announced his intended marriage as a settled thing without even asking or consulting him.

“My dear Lord Aronby,” said he, addressing him by his new title for the first time, “I lose myself in vain conjectures, so must beg of you to solve the enigma you have propounded; only hoping, for your sake and my own, that your choice has fall on no London Miss or Widow, who, for the most part, as Brantôme said of Marguerite de Valois, *en matière de galanterie en savent plus que leur pain quotidien.*”

“No; if she has any resemblance to Marguerite de Valois it ends with the beauty and the wit, and *Marot's*, not Brantôme's sketch of her; for I may truly say of her, as Marot did of Marguerite—

‘Son cœur constant, est pour heur, ou malheur,
Jamais trop gai, ni trop mélancolique.’”

“The more lavishly you throw in the perfections, the more I am puzzled; for I know of but *one* phoenix in this part of the world; and had you seen more of her, I should have felt convinced that your good taste and nice judgment could not have passed her over. But, as it is, you seem to have kept out of her way.”

“*Quit sait?*” smiled the young man, “you know *on se retire pour mieux sauter.* But to end your suspense,” added he, walking to the table, and writing on a sheet of paper which he handed to Sir Gregory, “here is the name of my *raré avis.*”

“Mary Penrhyn! I am, indeed, delighted, and *do* with all my heart and soul congratulate you! For a more filtered nature, if I may so express myself, a more finished excellence than hers I have rarely, if ever, met. The furnace-fires of affliction have truly left the ore of that golden heart pure and unalloyed. But do tell me all about it. After all, you must have been a sly dog to have kept the matter so snug.”

“My dear Sir Gregory, that is an unjust accusation, for I assure you, *you* have been made acquainted with my happiness as soon as I knew it myself.” And he here gave his attentively listening companion a circumstantial detail of all that had taken place between him and Mary Penrhyn on that day, concluding with—“And now, my dear Sir Gregory, I must trespass on your kindness to tell her of Lord Aronby’s death, and my sudden *reverse of fortune*, which I have not yet had the courage to do, as I have been hugging myself in the delightful certainty of her loving me for myself alone, as a poor penniless curate; and it is only this very evening that, in contemplating my possible change of position, though still supposing it far distant on the horizon of the future, she expressed a deep-rooted aversion, not to say disgust, to again being obliged to mix in a society, whose hollow selfishness, truculent vice, sordid corruption, and utter destitution of all those redeeming qualities

which Christianity enjoins, and which Christians profess, long ago weaned her from."

"She is right; and all who have graduated in those same great temples of vice and venality—our fashionable, political, and literary hemispheres—cannot, if one spark of truth is left in them, but endorse her opinion. A certain Oxford scholar, one Master Ingulph, was wont to boast that after he had mastered Aristotle he *then clothed himself down to the heels* with the first and second rhetoric of Tully. So I, for one, having mastered English society, have clothed myself down to the heels with a thorough knowledge of its loathsome hypocrisy and its execrable cant; and it is one of the laws of necessity, that both cant and hypocrisy *should be* paramount in a state where PROPERTY is the ONLY thing legislated for, and Mammon-worship—under the blasphemous *sobriquet* of Christianity—is the established religion of the country. For such a system, a shilling, and much more a sovereign, will, of course, outweigh a soul any day. Are Simpkins's turnips tampered with by some hungry plough-boy, the irate 'landed proprietor' instantly fires off a letter to 'The Times,' generously disclaiming any care for his *own individual* loss (?), but, in a fine plethora of patriotism, pointing out the incipient detriment such depredations may occasion to the Agricultural Interest; when, lo! a thousand Protectionist pens leap

from their inkstands to respond to this truly national appeal. But were Simpkins to have been cruelly aggrieved by any of his neighbours, or outraged by any member of his family, and was ass enough to seek the sympathy or assistance of his fellow-creatures, he would be curtly told by every newspaper editor in the kingdom that the *public* had nothing to do with affairs of a private nature; for *tangibly* there is no *money* involved in moral injuries, though, virtually, there is a great deal. Therefore if Smith's daughter is seduced, it is legally and specifically stated that *it is for the loss of her services* that he is to be indemnified; the wreck of the girl's soul and body and peace of mind being, of course, beyond the marketable point of view, and consequently trifles of no importance whatsoever, and being merely of a *private* and *domestic* nature, neither the public nor the legislature can be expected to feel the slightest interest in them. The same monetary principle reigns even in our conquests, for we never forget that we are a nation of shopkeepers. Wherever the Romans, invaded they brought blessings, for in exchange for the arid soil that they captured they left a long broad track of civilization. The modern Gauls do the same. Wherever they make barbaric conquests, *their* first care is to do honor to the GOD whom they worship, by erecting to Him temples in the strange land, and leading its

natives to His altars. We go to work after a more highwayman sort of fashion, and plainly tell the poor heathens that their MONEY or their lives we *must* have; and as for all the rest, far be it from us to interfere with them; as free-born Britons, we should be sorry to meddle with the prejudices of fettered-born Barbarians, so they are at perfect liberty to worship their idols of wood or of stone as long as they like, we having but one idol all the world over—to wit, the Sheffield pattern of the golden calf, found in the current coin of every country. Out of this intense and universal Mammon-worship it is that, of course, arises our verbal virtue and practised vice, and makes of our criminal and civil code a farcical social cobweb, constructed upon entomological principles, wherein small offenders get entangled and strangled, while the large, buzzing, blustering, burley blue-bottle miscreants, break through all its nominal restraints, and fill the world with their noise.”

“True, and this foul Mammon-worship it is which has filled our times with spurious ambitions, and made private vice and utter want of principle a sort of diploma, as it were, to public honors; for ambition, like every other passion, is dual. In noble natures, it always aspires upwards; whereas in mean ones it becomes the most unscrupulous of all vices, whether it vaults from the tortuous steps of a throne, or springs from the prurient corruption

of a dunghill, an extended *circumference* being its sole aim, of which SELF is at once the paltry centre and the paltry limit. With such men, to *seem* is everything, to *be*, nothing. Their strongest desire, their unique purpose, is to distinguish themselves from the crowd; they have an *un*-intermitting fever to do whatsoever shall make them known—that is, talked about—which is the small change for celebrity, as the vulgar imagine that it pre-supposes a great capital of merit; the object of such ephemeral charlatans, such *touters* to tradition, being *coûte-qu'il-coûte* to assert a powerful assendancy not only over the attention, but also over the opinions of their fellow men; and this ONE aim absorbs all the energies of their intellectual, and swamps all those of their moral, nature; for no man, who, *à la* Caligula, erects a temple to himself, of which SELF is likewise the High Priest, ever yet thought that there was sufficient room in the world for any one *but* self. Therefore such men are ever ready with the blackest of extinguishers to put out the lights of others, unless it be some few farthing rush-lights, which, by their dim contrast, add to their own brilliancy; to such indeed, they will gladly play the Mecænas and the magnanimous; even to furnishing them with golden sconces for their small glimmerings. The more I look back into the past, and round about upon the present, the more I fear that Nature is a niggard, and never

can achieve one great and uniform noble work without making a thousand mediocrities, or monstrosities, to balance her lavishness. For instance—as we all preach for our own parish—to select a bright ornament from my own profession; when, for example, Nature made Sydney Smith large in his *physique*, larger in his heart and mind, genuine in his goodness, original in his genius, Christian in his conduct, many-sided in his capacities, wise in his wit, witty in his wisdom, eloquent in his ethics, ethical in his eloquence, pious in his practice, and unpharisaical in his piety—pray how many men, husbands, fathers, friends, authors, *beaux esprits*, and prelates, do you suppose Nature defrauded to endow this prodigal son of hers, who, unlike most favorites, it must be confessed, deserved, and did credit to her partiality?”

“Why she certainly robbed to destitution,” laughed Sir Gregory, “in framing the Incumbent of Combe Florey, more of all and each of the class you have mentioned than I should care to risk my head by enumerating, under the present PUFFOCRACY. But as the *ne plus ultra* of all the iniquities rising like a death-laden malaria out of the foul idolatry of our national Mammon-worship. look at our revolting and disgracefully one-sided Ecclesiastical laws!”

“Oh! *those* I console myself by thinking are *so bad*, so cryingly monstrous! that they *must* and

will right themselves ; for the marriage laws of England as they exist, and the *happy* couples which are their result, may all be summed up and condensed in one pithy couplet from 'The New Tale of a Tub'—

' Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! it's very clear
They *can't* live so, *but they daren't let go.*'

But to return to one of the black-thorns of the Mammon-tree which graces, or as some are *borné* enough to think disgraces our charming social system—the received opinion that vice once gilt becomes virtue ; and that ungilded merit, however exalted, amounts, if not to actual guilt, at least only to a cipher which can never make a figure ; which system it is that puts such men as Sir Titaniferous Thompson into fine houses, and fills those houses with servile satellites. Now, my dear Sir Gregory, I have *one* great favour still to ask at your hands, in addition to all the innumerable ones I have already received—it is, that you will hallow my accession to the root of all evil, by allowing me to deal with this man when the mortgage expires.”

“ I thank you, my dear Aronly, not a thousand times, but with a thousand hearts, for your generous kindness ; but it is impossible ! I should think myself a second Sir Titaniferous, preying upon the inexperience of youth, could I bring

myself to take advantage of your first ray of Fortune's sunshine to bask in it."

"Oh, Sir Gregory! Sir Gregory! I had hoped—I *had believed* in better things from *you*; but your simile is as false as your delicacy, for is not sunshine catholic and not contracted? But I see with even the best and purest, the mildew of mortal imperfection may be found when circumstances call it forth. Reverse our positions, and would *you* not do that?—aye, and ten times more for me. Ah! Sir Gregory it is cruel and offensive, to say the least of it, to show me so plainly that you do not, even in so trifling a matter, think *me* worthy of being placed on a par with you."

"My dear Lethbridge—let me still call you so, for I shall never love any other name so well," said Sir Gregory, dashing away a tear—"since you put it on *that* footing it is true; for, though in this race of Time, my lengthening shadow warns me how I have distanced you in years, the light of experience shows me how far *you* have out-stripped *me* in all the best and noblest virtues of which human nature is silently, actively, and unostentatiously capable; and, therefore, it is to be feared that I never shall attain to the level, that is, to the height of your pedestal."

The young man shook his head mournfully, and said, with a look of deep and unaffected disappointment, "Ah! my dear Sir Gregory, compliments

and sophistry are not argument; but, thank Heaven," added he, suddenly brightening, "as you never have *yet* interfered between Mary and her pupils, you cannot for very shame begin to do so *now*; and I know her horror of *post mortem* bequests, that mouldy, grave-girt generosity (?) which can never give from its most abundant superfluity, but munificently leaves what it cannot take with it, and, therefore, carrying out her peculiar views on this subject, if she likes to give each of her pupils ten thousand pounds a-piece—which I know is exactly what she *would* like—she shall have my cordial concurrence, and you can scarcely object to *their* subscribing three thousand a-piece to settle Sir *Parvenu* Thompson's claims. So that's all right," laughed he, snapping his fingers, as the amiable Mr. William Palmer did, when informed by Newton that a grain of strychnia left no traces after death."

But the old man did not laugh; he fairly burst into tears and covered his face with one hand, while he extended the other to his companion, and said—

"I am not ashamed of these, Lethbridge; let them thank you, for words cannot. But—but—noble and generous as you are, one can't, one don't accept such presents ——"

"Oh, yes one does!" replied he, his handsome face now radiant, as he nearly shook Sir Gregory's

hand off. "Only, one accepts them, as Tacitus tells us the Germans receive, or used to receive presents, and give them too, without any reciprocations of gratitude. *You owe me* none, I assure you, and though, judging by the immense amount of unalloyed happiness I feel, I suppose I *ought* to owe you a great deal, yet I don't or *won't*—I mean I have no intention—of paying you, but will go on being in your debt till the end of the chapter, to prove that I enter upon my new dignity with a proper sense of what is due to my order. And yet look what I *do* owe you, and even that dear, detestable, ugly, vulgar, vicious, swindling sharper, Sir Titaniferous Thompson! as but for him, and his doings, I never could have had an opportunity of giving Mary more pleasure than all the Aronby diamonds, or all the heirlooms of Glenomera Castle put together, I know, ever *will* give her. But I must have it all *en règle*; all sealed, and signed; or else I shall wake to-morrow morning (if, indeed, I sleep to night) thinking it all a dream, too good to be true, too happy to last. So now, my dear Sir Gregory, not another word," added he, hurrying him over to the writing-table, pressing him down into the chair with both hands on his shoulders, and placing a pen in his hand;—"crown all your goodness by writing to that rascally fellow exactly what I shall dictate ——"

"But, my dear Lethbridge——"

"No 'buts,' unless, indeed, you like to make a butt of Sir Titaniferous.

"SIR,

"I must beg leave most explicitly to decline your compromise of a further advance of £4,000 on the mortgage-money of Baron's Court, being fully prepared to meet all your just demands at the expiration of the mortgage.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"GREGORY KEMPENFELT.

"To Sir Titaniferous Thompson, Bart., M.P.,

"Dunnington House,

"Hyde Park,

"London."

"There! now when sealed give it to me, and let me put it into the post *myself*; or, like the children, I shall never feel sure that it is gone."

"Oh! Lethbridge, am I waking, or am I sleeping?"

"It is fit for all good people by this time to be the latter; but as I shall have to go to London soon, and it may be some time before the poor Curate of Llylisfern, your domestic chaplain-in-ordinary, has the happiness of reading prayers for you again, we will have them now," and so saying, in order to prevent Sir Gregory uttering a word, he rang the bell, which, being answered—

"Gifford," said he, "Sir Gregory wishes to have prayers in the library to-night."

"Very good, Sir; do you sleep here to-night, Mr. Lethbridge?"

"No, I *must* return home; so have the goodness to let Miss Kempfenfelt and the servants know immediately, Gifford."

And soon the whole household came pouring in, with the exception of May, Linda, and Charley, who were all gone to bed."

"Not a word about Lord Aronby's death to-night," said his successor, in a low and hurried voice to Sir Gregory, as Miss Charity, Mary Penrhyn, and the rest of the household entered. His voice at all times deep, mellow, impressive, and beautifully modulated, was peculiarly so on this night; for it almost seemed, in the extempore prayer with which he invariably concluded the stereotyped devotions, as if the angel who had brought him so many glad tidings on that day still lingered in his heart, as in a holy place; and as he spoke those solemn things, telling them how thin was the barrier between heaven and earth, the mingled feeling that thrilled through his words was as the fluttering of that angel's silver wings, attuning his every thought to GOD, and purifying them from earth's corrupting leaven. "My dear friends," said he, in conclusion—"whatever your cares, your sufferings, or your fears, or even your joys and

your hopes, cast them on Him who careth for you. A great sorrow we *cannot* bear without His gracious help, and a great joy we have no right to, till we have offered up its first-fruits, the out-pourings of a glad spirit to Him Who gave it,—to Him—

“ Who bids the humble daisy pass
From winter’s sleep to deck our grave ;
And Who with verdure clothes the grass,
And still upholds the life He gave ?
The Lord of life, the grass, the flower,
He quickened, and will still sustain ;
And by the same Almighty power
Our dust shall rise again.”

“ Good night! GOD bless you!” said he, to all and each, shaking hands with them, as soon as the servants had left the room ; and as Miss Charity was deaf, and busily through her eye-glass investigating the name of a newspaper on the table, and Sir Gregory, being troubled with an unusual suffusion of the eyes, had turned towards the fire-place to hide it, the Curate of Llylisfern, contrived by a dexterous piece of *legère-de-main*, that would not have discredited “The Wizard of the North,” or M. Robin, to seize Mary Penrhyn’s hand, and all in imprinting a noiseless kiss upon it, murmured—

“ Felice notte, a revederle tante cara!”

CHAPTER VII.

Showing how the Carate-perc revenges himself on the Reverend Sabaz Fowl.—The Departure.



O attempt to arrest the flight of happiness, the warp of whose wings are of the thinnest æther, and their weft of the rain-bow's lines, is about as wise as the idiot, who, the poet tells us, on coming to the river's side, stayed waiting for the water to *pass on*, and so leave him a dry passage !

" ———— at ille

Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."

For still the river runs on, and on, for ever ; and still Happiness eludes the grasp of those who would retain her ; and the brighter she has made the spot on which she has alighted for a moment, the

darker and colder is the shadow cast by her receding form, as it soars upwards to its only abiding-place.

A month had elapsed since the news of Horace Lethbridge's accession to his cousin's titles and estates had reached Baron's Court; and the joy that seized upon all the young, and semi-detached young ladies of Flintshire and the three adjoining counties at this intelligence, was soon dispelled by the quickly succeeding news of his engagement to Mrs. Penrhyn; or, as she was designated in the County Chronicle, by the aforesaid Spinsteroocracy, "*that designing governess of Sir Gregory Kempenfelts.*"

Meanwhile, so callous were the designing governess and the new peer to both the opinions and the *on dits* of that and the surrounding "ilks," that they never even bestowed a thought upon them, but were as happy, and sufficed as completely to themselves, as if the population of Paradise had never increased beyond the first man and woman, and that *they* had been that man and that woman. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" are world-old questions that still remain unanswered, as far as any affirmative demonstration on the part of either of those individuals goes; but the Rev. Jabez Jowl soon gave evidence that the parson *can* change, or rather doff his prejudices, however ingrained, when even a

lord *temporal* is in the case, for he became to the *çi devant* poor curate of Llylisfern, not only civil, but servile.

Quia aliter esse non potuit,

As the Roman Historian somewhat exaggeratedly expresses it, touching Cato's virtue ; for though as we have seen, generally confining himself to "*Mosses*," and the *profits* of his fat living, yet in favor of the new lord Aronby, the reverend gentleman seemed to be quite of the opinion of Melchior Canus, who, with regard to the strength of human testimony in some cases, (which he did not believe to be infallible,) defines it thus: "Those things are certain among men, which cannot be denied without obstinacy and folly." And in like manner, though Mr. Jowl by no means considered the unanimous testimony of three parishes to the Christian virtues of the curate of Llylisfern as infallible, yet he was quite willing to look upon, and bow down to, a peer of the realm, as one of "those things among men which cannot be denied without obstinacy and folly." So, all unknown to himself, the reverend gentleman agreed with Aristotle, how unreasonable it is to expect the same kind of proof for everything; and consequently, though the most allopathic evidences had failed to convince him of the merits of an unorthodox, liberal-minded curate, the most homœopathic

globule of prudence had soon made him so sensible of those of a liberal-*handed* lord, that had the latter even thought fit to ask his daughter, Miss Kerenhappuch Jowl, in marriage, her sire would *not* have withheld his consent, more especially as she was far from being, like her namesake, Job's daughter, "the fairest woman in all the land."

But the curate peer, in "setting his house in order" before he quitted his little parish of Llylisfern for ever, continued to tread in the same sheep-walk among his fold that he had ever done; for, to use a mathematical expression, which better expresses our meaning than any other,—Christianity, as enjoined by Christ, being his *vectis*,* he never deviated from the height and line to which it had raised him; therefore the only difference that either his old or young parishioners could perceive in him since his accession of worldly honors was, that with the will, had now come the power, to relieve their necessities; so that in most instances, the prayers and hopes he had before only taught them, he now realized. And, in order to leave no score unsettled, he presented Mr. Jowl's eldest son with the living of Glenomera, worth about £600 a year, now in his gift. But though all these coals of fire heaped on the Rev. Jabez Jowl's head, by

* A *vectis*, in mathematics, is a lever supposed to be an inflexible right line, without any weight, and is accounted the first of the six powers.

no means appeared even to singe his hair, (probably because, from his love of what he called *spoiling the Egyptians*, he had insured that edifice by rubbing it with a preparation of asbestos,) yet certain it is, that they *did* kindle a very glowing gratitude in the heart of Jabez the younger, who felt it deeply, though he expressed it awkwardly, for had he not been brought up on true Anglo-Saxon, *noli me tangeri* principles, (?) to religiously believe that—

“When a good manner appears, good sense retires.”

But the kind cordiality of his patron's manner, the hospitable and primitive way in which he went to the side-closet, in the room where the curate of Llylisfern was wont to keep his little store of port wine for the poor, and tent for the Sacrament, and with his own hand filled out two glasses of the former, that he might, as he said, drink the health of his new rector, and the delicate way in which he wrapped up advice in the pronoun “we,” and diluted censure in generalities, quite thawed the pent-up feelings in the poor young man's long conventionally ice-bound heart; and they at length came gushing and bounding forth in an irrepressible torrent.

“The fact is, Mr. Jowl,” said Lord Aronby, stirring the fire, “we English are rather too oysterish, and live too exclusively in our shells; and this

disease of exclusiveness does not *always* engender pearls. Now what you and I must do at Glenomera is, to mix with, and cultivate *all* classes ; for there is no use in *preaching to* the people unless we *practise with them* ; and it is a great mistake to suppose that charity and Christian benevolence are things like coals and blankets, to be distributed *solely* among the poor ; the often misnomered “ rich ” or upper classes are frequently with their broken hearts, and ship-wrecked fates, their padlocked sorrows, and their unlegislated-for moral wrongs, quite as great, and sometimes *far greater* objects for Christian charity and *active* sympathy, than are the lower orders, with their easily ministered-to material wants. It is true, that in selecting for our work these far more perilous plague-wards of private and, it may be, unsuspected wretchedness, our names are neither proclaimed from the minarets, nor echoed in the marts ; but they are known in Heaven, and registered in GOD’S Eternal Book. Depend upon it, my dear Sir, that to concentrate ourselves *in self*, is to corrode ourselves ; whereas, to diffuse—that is, to spread ourselves out as much as possible over the joys and sorrows of our fellow-creatures—is to bleach away, as much as may be, beneath the pure light of heaven, all our original blemishes and discolorations, and to perfectionise our mortal tissue, as far as it is here capable of being perfected.

“There is an old play of Cyrano de Bergerac’s called ‘The Mock Pedant,’” added he, lowering his voice, and looking towards the door with a waggish smile—“which, as the Rector of Baron’s Court is *not* here, I may perhaps venture to quote ; wherein he says, ‘Men are vain, full of contempt, and consequently unjust, whenever they can be so with impunity. For which reason, all men imagine that on this globe, there is no part of it ; in this part of the earth, no nation ; in the nation, no province ; in the province, no city ; in the city, no society, comparable to *theirs*. They think themselves superior to all their acquaintance ; and, step by step, surprise themselves into a secret persuasion that they are the first persons in the universe.” Now the more we narrow our individual or our national sphere, the more strongly do we rivet the sharp pivot round which revolves this ridiculous and repulsive illusion ; and all in avoiding others, we become objects to be assiduously shunned ourselves, as misanthropical solitaries. Now, on the contrary, look at a man of large sympathies ; of a cosmopolite heart, and of a high intelligence. Unfettered by local and conventional prejudices, and thoroughly filtered from every dreg of selfishness, like Sir Gregory Kempenfelt, such a man is one of the viceroys of Providence, whose acts are his credentials. I do not for a moment presume to think that, do our best, we shall ever be able to

equal this great good man, at Glenomera; but at all events, it will be no small merit if we endeavour to emulate him. And now, not to detain you longer, I will give you a line to Mitford, the steward at Glenomera Castle. I cannot tell you what sort of person he is, never having seen him myself yet; but as I understand my predecessor was perfectly satisfied with him, I have continued him in my service."

And, as Lord Aronby turned to the writing-table to indite this letter to the steward, his grateful *protégé* could not help thinking, as he studied the real beauty of holiness that illumined his strikingly handsome and intellectual face, that his own heart and soul had expanded more, in his short intercourse with this practical but *unprofessing* Christian, than it had done in the whole four-and-twenty years he had been systematically, and periodically, listening to his father's orthodox and ready-made spiritualities, (?) although the reverend gentleman preserved, for the special use of his own family, an old Sternhold-and-Hopkins Prayer Book, bound in black leather, with brass clasps, which had belonged to an ancestor of his, one Hezekiah Ap Jowl; and in reading the Psalms of the day and evening, he always began at the beginning of this precious relic, so that after innumerable sonorous, not to say startling, "ahems!" the preamble of the family prayers invariably ran

as follows—the Rev. *Paterfamilias*, for the more immediate warning, and edification of his own household, not letting them off one letter of the “serious” title-page, but thundering out—

“AHEM!”

“THE WHOLE BOOK

OF

PSALMS,

COLLECTED INTO ENGLISH METER

BY

THOMAS STERNHOLD, JOHN HOPKINS,

AND OTHERS.

Set forth and allowed to be sung in all Churches of all the people together, before and after Morning and Evening Prayer, and also before and after sermons; and moreover in private houses, for their godly solace and comfort: laying apart all *ungodly songs and ballads, which tend only to the nourishing of vice and corrupting of youth.*

JAMES V. 13.

If any be afflicted let him pray; and if any be merry let him sing Psalms.

COLOS. iii. 16.

Let the word of God dwell plenteous in you, in all wisdom, teaching, and exhorting one another in Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing unto the LORD with grace in your hearts.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE COMPANY OF STATIONERS.

MDCCV.

The lines about songs and ballads tending only to the nourishment of vice and corruption of youth we have italicised, to shew the peculiar stress, emphasis, and importance, the reverend gentleman attached to them; while he finally wound up the exordium by imploring them to have grace in their

'arts, for so he always called hearts, no doubt thinking that, as we are told, the heart is deceitful above all things, 'arts' was the more correct reading.

Lord Aronby, having finished, sealed, and directed the letter to the steward of Glenomera Castle, rose and gave it to the new incumbent of that living, saying with a smile, "I have told Mitford to see that you have a warm reception at the vicarage; but I can give you no insight either into your parish or parishioners. As for me Glenomera only begins with my own accession to it, though I *conclude* it *must* have been created before, upon Lucretius's plan of supposing the pre-existence of the world to the Theban war—

' ——— Si nulla fuit genitalis origo
Terrarum et cœli, semperque æterna fuere;
Car supra bellum Thebanum et funera Trojæ,
Non alias alii quoq; res cecinere Poetæ?'"

"It is utterly impossible for me," said the young man, with much emotion, as he took the letter, "to express the gratitude that I feel for your lordship's beneficence and generosity—a generosity all the greater for being so totally unexpected and, I grieve to say, undeserved, at your hands."

"Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD's.' And gratitude is, for all blessings or benefits, alone due to Him; and the best way of evincing it is in

all things doing His will, as far as in us lies ; and when He sends us blessings, sharing them, as far as possible, with our less fortunate fellow-creatures as *His instruments*. I am very willing not only to accept, but to reciprocate, the good-will you feel towards me. And now," added he, shaking his new vicar cordially by the hand, "farewell, and *do well* ; I dare say I shall be at Glenomera as soon as you, for having arranged all my affairs here, I shall go to London on Monday, and then into Herefordshire the week after——"

As he was still speaking, a groom, in the Kempenfelt livery, galloped past the window, and the next moment a note was brought to him. It was from Mary Penrhyn, and ran as follows :—

"For Heaven's sake come over immediately ! I am so wretched—so agitated—I scarcely know what I write. Our dearest May is visibly fading, like a dissolving view, before my eyes. I have dreaded this a long time, and yet the blow stuns me, now that it has fallen. The old man's tears, the angel-smile of the young girl, put on already, are more than I can bear. Oh ! Horace, I knew—I felt—that we were *too* happy, happier than mortals have a right to be ; but this—this—is, indeed, paying too costly a price for it. Quick ! quick ! she wishes to receive the Sacrament from *you*.

"Ever your own,

"MARY."

Without a word, he seized his hat, and mounting the groom's horse, galloped back to Baron's Court. The sky was of a grey dull gloom, but not a breeze was stirring; as if Nature herself kept in her universal breath while that pure young spirit was passing upwards to its eternal home. As he rode, or rather shot like a flash of lightning, through the village, every cottage door was filled with mourners, old and young, the women with their aprons to their eyes, the men with folded arms, and the children with wide distended eyes, looking inquiringly up to both; for though May had risen that morning without any apparent increase of her insidious malady, yet suddenly, within the last two hours, her young life, like the flickerings of an expiring lamp, had given evidence that it was about to go out; and as the groom had passed through the village, on his way to Llylisfern, he had spread the sad tidings. On arriving at Baron's Court, the hall was deserted, and no servant greeted him; but, on going up the great staircase, he found the gallery thronged, and not one, but was drowned in tears.

"In the amber breakfast-room, my lord," sobbed Grant, who had been sent out of the room from the loudness of her uncontrollable grief. He opened the door gently—noiselessly. In a high-backed chair reclined the shadowy form of the fair human blossom, who was now rapidly shed-

ding her leaves of fleeting life, like those of the sweet fair flower whose name she bore. Her head was leaning on Mary Penrhyn's bosom—one small shadowy hand her grandfather held in both his; Linda, and Charley, were kneeling beside her—both drowned in tears; and poor aunt Charity for once forgot all her bodily ills, as she leant over the chair, braving bronchitis, without a shawl,—so totally absorbed was she in this great grief. The dying girl turned her eyes towards the new arrival as he entered, and murmured "Thank God!" He immediately knelt down beside her, as did they all, (with the exception of Mary Penrhyn, on whose bosom she still leant,) and began to read in his sweet, impressive, but now faltering voice, the Service for the Sick, adding, as was his wont, a short extempore prayer of his own, taking for his text the 25th Psalm, 16th verse—

"Turn Thee unto me and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted."

But *that* was for those who remained; and having told how only the pure in spirit shall see GOD, he cast a look full of hope and exultation at the departing angel, saying as he rose up—

"They shall be mine, saith the LORD of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."*

And then, all things having been placed ready

* Mal. iii. 17.

for the Sacrament before his arrival, he administered it to her.

"You are cruel to mourn," said she faintly, trying to look round on them all, but finally resting her eyes, with their fast fading light, on her grandfather's pale, heart-stricken face; "very cruel when I am *so* happy."

"My child! my darling!" faltered the old man, "I mourn that I am such a loiterer. *I* should have gone before ——"

"Does not GOD know best? So *you* have always taught me," said she, pressing his hand, and then, after a pause, and another effort, she said—

"And Linda, dear Linda! and my little Charley,—they will comfort you, grandpapa, till we all meet again, where there is no more parting, no more tears. And Aunt Charity, ask her to forgive me for all I have ever done to displease her."

Sir Gregory drew her forward, she saw the movement of May's lips, she could not hear her words, and yet it seemed as if they had found their way to her heart, for she burst into a fresh paroxysm of tears. The dying girl then held out her hand to him who had taught her better things than Hebrew—even the language of that Heaven to which she was now hastening—and, placing it within the hand of Mary Penrhyn, "GOD bless you both!" murmured she; "and as soon as I

am gone, dearest Mrs. Penrhyn, there is a packet you will find in my desk ; read it, and—and——” but here a slight spasm stopped her speech. When it had passed she once more opened her languid eyes, and said, “GOD bless you all !” These were her last words, and those deep, loving eyes, which had never opened but to bless or to be blessed, now closed for ever !

A piercing shriek escaped from Linda.

“May! May! come back!” cried she, passionately or rather, convulsively, clasping her sister’s lifeless form ; “come back, for I *cannot* bear it !”

“Linda!” said the young clergyman—as the tears streamed down his own cheeks—forcibly drawing her away, “do you know that you are blasphemously contending with GOD? The burdens *He* imposes we *must* bear; the blows He deals we must *not* resist. Kneel down and pray with me, that He may fill up this great void with mercy; even His mercy, which is peace and hope. The peace which *none* can trouble, is now hers; let the hope that we may be worthy to rejoin her, be ours.”

“GOD bless you, my darling,” said the bereft old man, imprinting a last kiss on the pale beauty of that now rigid face ; “it cannot be long, at all events, before *we* meet again.” And he took poor Charley up in his arms, who was not crying, only staring and cold, and looking exceedingly fright-

ened ; and as they left the room, the child clasped his grandfather silently round the neck, and his young golden hair mingled caressingly with the silver locks of the other, as he whispered—

“But will May *never* come back then?”

* * * * *

That night, Mary Penrhyn, with a sort of cruel self-torture, from a morbid feeling, as it were, to still commune with the gentle spirit that she so loved, opened the packet that May Egerton had left sealed up and directed to her. On doing so, she found a small ivory and sandal-wood Indian box, containing a long string of fine pear-shaped pearls, with a large emerald between each, which had belonged to Mrs. Egerton. Besides this, there was a small miniature, in a plain setting, which, to her great surprise, was a beautifully done copy of her own miniature of Harcourt. Bewildered and additionally distressed, it fell from her hands, and then, seeing a letter in poor May's writing, addressed to herself, she hastily and tremblingly broke the seal. It began—

“Dearest Mrs. Penrhyn,

“Ever kind and indulgent, as you have been to me, after dear grandpapa, my best and tried councillor and friend, from whom I never had

a secret but *one*, even if you blame and laugh at my folly, as I know you will (if indeed you do not condemn it as a more serious fault) yet pity and forgive me; for this secret even *you* shall never know, till I am where reproof cannot, but pardon *may* reach me. It was all very wrong I fear, and very foolish I know; but indeed, I could not help it. How can I tell it you? but yes, when you read this, you cannot see either my blushes, my tears, or my regret. Here then is my confession. From the first day you came to us, I admired that picture of your son, for I thought it the most beautiful and loveable face I had ever seen, then you read out his letters as they came, and praised him incessantly, as the noblest and best of GOD's creatures. I prayed night and day that he might be preserved through all the dangers he was ever braving; first for your sake, and—and—then for my own; for I soon found I thought of nothing else; every night I cried myself to sleep, thinking over the horrid accounts of those dreadful battles we read of, in the day, and fearing that every post might render them even more horrible to you, and to me; in short, what had begun in dreams and castle-building, ended in becoming not only a part, but the chief part of my existence. I had always longed for a mother—I thought how I should like to be *your* daughter—a thousand times I was on the point of opening my heart to you, and telling

you all my folly, but was deterred by the fear of the bad opinion it would give you of me ; knowing what a disgust you had to anything like forwardness in a woman ; and what would—what could you think of my loving a person, not only who did not care for me, but whom I had never seen. Still, I went on in my folly ; and when we sent the frame of your miniature to London to be re-set, I kept the picture and copied it ; and having obtained it, I wore it night and day, till the letter came filled with your son's love for Lady Florinda Andover, whom I had heard you say was *so* beautiful, and who is, as he says, so truly worthy of his love. *Then* it was, I for the first time was awakened to my worse than folly ; for if an avalanche had fallen on me, I could not have felt more completely, more irremediably crushed ; life and hope at once seemed to drop out of the frame-work of my existence, like some costly jewels from their setting, leaving nothing but a wide unsightly space. Everything became distasteful to me. I quarrelled with the very stars, and flowers, for I used to fancy, silly fool that I was, that *he* looked at me through the one, and breathed on me through the other. But at length, I roused myself ; I took off his picture, and I put it away for ever ; for it would have been a sin to love a man that was to be another woman's husband. Then, for dear grandpapa's sake, for my poor Linda's, and Charley's, and for yours, I would

have given the world to have sprung back into my former self, and been the May I *had* been, with this folly buried for ever in my own heart ; but it was too late. Then do not grieve for me, dearest Mrs. Penrhyn ; for remember I am gone where sin, and sorrow, are unknown ; so only pity and forgive, but do *not regret me*. The pearls you will find with this, were my poor mother's ; give them to your son, and ask him to beg his beautiful Florinda to wear them on her wedding-day. Tell him that the donor prayed that they might both be happy ; but do not tell him or any one else, my folly ; and above all, do not tell it to poor darling grandpapa ; as I know it would greatly add to his sorrow ; but you may tell it to your second self ; for I should greatly like my old master, if ever he leaves his fine castle to pay poor Llylisfern a visit in the spring of the year, to plant a spray of my namesake flower on my grave, in the little old churchyard of dear Baron's Court, under the great yew-trees where I wish to be buried, instead of in the mausoleum, where I'm sure I could not even moulder freely ; this branch of May will do for my epitaph. And now, good bye, and GOD bless you, dearest, kindest, and best Mrs. Penrhyn. I leave to dear Linda, grandpapa, and my little Charley, all the love and care you used to bestow on your

“Grateful and affectionate,

“MAY EGERTON.

“Baron's Court, Dec. 12th, 1855.”

This letter, which was dated three days before her death, fell from Mary Penrhyn's hands.

"Oh!" cried she, in an agony of grief, falling upon her knees, "what a return to make for all the kindness I have received, and all the happiness I have found in this house, to be the indirect cause of that young angel's death. Could I only have suspected or supposed anything so improbable, and yet I *did* suspect there was something—how wrong, how stupid, how culpable of me not to have discovered this before it was too late! Idiot that I was, erecting barricades and fortifications against an imaginary foe, and blindly opening wide the citadel, and delivering up the keys to a real one. My GOD! my GOD! thy ways are not as our ways—Oh! vouchsafe us amid this labyrinth of thy mysterious miracles—the clue of submission." And so she continued to rave out prayers and supplications, till Miss Kempenfelt and Grant found her, and she was conveyed to bed in a high fever.

* * * * *

That day week all that remained of May Egerton was buried, according to her wish, beneath the old yew tree's wide-spreading branches in Baron's Court Church-yard; the deep, sweet, and now intensely sorrowful voice, that had so often taught her divine truths in their original language, reading the last beautiful service over her, for, as it may be supposed, her old master had *not* deserted her. It was impossible to say who was

chief mourner—the very birds, from the chirping robin to the rueful raven, seemed to put in their claim; and nature had contributed a fitting winding sheet of pure and unsunned snow; while for the white marble urn at the head, the Curate of Llylisfern had selected from his favorite, Joseph Snow, the following

INSCRIPTION.

“ Not for the maiden sleeping here
Thy tears bestow, thy sorrows give;
Pass on, and weep with grief sincere
For those who innocence out-live.
Thrice happy who no sin e'er knew
But what baptismal grace has healed,
Whose nature Christ could scarce renew
Ere God by early death has sealed.”

CHAPTER VIII.

In which Mr. Phippen proves himself a friend indeed, and Sir Titaniferous Champson a friend in need; and Lord Pendarris re-appears on the horizon.



EVEN months had passed, since May Egerton had been consigned to her last resting place; and not only in the ravings of delirium, but in the calm and recovered certainty of her irrevocable loss, Mary Penrhyn did not cease reproaching herself for what, in truth, she was in no other way the cause of, than by being the mother of Harcourt. And devoted as were Lord Aronby's affectionate and ceaseless attentions and solicitude, and urgent, and eloquent, as were his arguments and entreaties, the former could not

succeed in banishing her regret; nor the latter in prevailing on her to consent to their marriage. For Baron's Court, that had been such a city of refuge, such a haven of happiness to her, she would not, she could not leave when it was converted into a house of mourning, and "a great and mighty shadow had fallen" upon a now vacant space in its once bright sphere, that never more could be filled. So Horace had nothing for it but to submit, which he did, with all the better grace that, in his secret soul, he would have despised her had she acted otherwise. So he was fain to pass his time in making preparations for the reception of its future mistress at Glenomera Castle, and in journeys, to and fro, between it, and Baron's Court.

Meanwhile, great public changes, and chances had also taken place; a disgracefully ill-conducted war had been followed by an equally disgraceful and humiliating peace; but true to the one pole to which our national needle always points, scarcely was the ink dry, by which we bound ourselves to a future abject, indisputable and wife-like obedience to the will and pleasure of Russia, than we flew to scrape the pence off of the poor soldiers wounds, by stopping the beggarly sixpence a day, with which their country—no, their government—had so nobly (!) recompensed (?) them for sowing the hard and unequally fought fields of Inkermann,

the Alma, and Balaklava, with their limbs, and irrigating the arid plains of the Crimea with their blood. It is true, the officers were even more splendidly rewarded with three pocket handkerchiefs to each battalion, of the best Spitalfields manufacture, hemmed at Windsor; and that one poor soldier, with *only* thirty-one wounds, had received the unheard of, and certainly the unprecedented *largesse* (?) of a whole ten-pound note! which reminded one, though rather in another sense, of the critique on the cost of the pillar erected to the victories of the great Condé—

“*Diantre ! ça n'est pas un sou par victoire.*”

Harcourt Penrhyn's wound, from having returned to his duty too soon, had opened again, so that he had to enjoy the honors of his purchased company and his gold-hilted sword, in the hospital at Scutari; but Florinda's letters, and the news of his mother's intended marriage expedited his recovery, more even than medical skill and good nursing, though he was much indebted to the perfection of both. Yet still, he was one of the very last to remain in the Crimea, and it was not till a bright April morning, in 1856, that “The Esmeralda” might again have been seen dancing lightly, like an ocean *Coryphée*, on the sparkling sun-spangled waves in the roads of Sevastopol, But this time, Lord De Baskerville and Dr. Ross,

were alone on board. They had promised, the moment there was a certainty of peace, to return and convey Captain Penrhyn home, who, as it may be supposed, had no difficulty in obtaining a twelve-months' leave of absence for the recovery of his health. But Lady De Baskerville, who was furious at her daughter's confession of her engagement to her cousin Harcourt, positively forbid her returning with her brother; so that if we want to see her again we must go to Belgrave-square, upon whose gay-looking French blinds, an afternoon May sun, almost bright enough to have been a French sun, was now pouring down. On the opposite side of the square to Lady De Baskerville's house, basking, as it were, in the unusual geniality of the weather, were Lord Pendarvis and Mr. Phippen, walking leisurely up and down. Lord Daventry, Lord Pendarvis's father, lived in the house out of which the former had just come. Somehow or other, on the principle, no doubt, of Fourier's *atomes crocheus*, ever since Mr. Phippen had forwarded his very munificent subscription of five hundred pounds to Lord Pendarvis, for the purchase of the company and sword for Harcourt Penrhyn, they twain had become exceedingly intimate, and upon this particular morning Mr. Phippen, having been his own messenger, had just left a note with Lady De Baskerville's porter, and was returning leisurely to his quiet little hotel,

with his hands behind his back, and his hat slouched over his eyes rather more than usual, when he met Lord Pendarvis issuing from his father's house.

"My dear Sir," cried he, holding out his hand to Mr. Phippen, "you are the very man I wanted to see, we were just talking of you."

"Eh! 'egad! talk of the devil you know?" "or *vice versâ*, car vous le savez les extrêmes se touchent. A çè qu'il paraît pour le moment;" laughed Mr. Phippen, as Lord Pendarvis passed an arm through his.

"Do you know," said the latter, "I was just on my way to your office, to get *an opinion* which, in the affair in question, I should prefer to a lawyer's; I won't detain you five minutes."

"Five hours if you wish, for I have nothing particular to do to-day."

"The gist of the matter is this; I have an insurmountable horror of that Sir Titaniferous Thompson, a sort of instinctive warning horror as poor Cooke had of Palmer's pills. Now the governor, on the contrary, seems positively bewitched by him, and is actually walking into his maw, as the poor little feathered fools are said to do into that of the rattle-snake. I fear this Thompson has already let him in for something considerable; but he has now a new iron in the fire, the Grand Duchy of Swill-and-smokem Lead Mines, in which he wants Lord Daventry to take unlimited shares, and for which

he wants him to become a director. How say *you*? Thou man of mines and merit, or mines of merit; advisable, or not advisable."

"On no account let your father have anything to do with this swine, with this scheme," said Mr. Phippen, curtly.

"Thank goodness, he promised me that he would not conclude anything with Sir Titaniferous till I had taken your opinion on the subject, and that he would abide by it. Now do tell me in confidence, and I assure you it shall go no farther. Am I right in my conjecture, that the Brummagem baronet is by no means the Cræsus that he is supposed to be?"

"Well," said Mr. Phippen, with as much uncompromising diplomatic ambiguity as if he had graduated in Downing-street, or matriculated in a Protectionist Ministry of three whole days' duration; "he *may* be a man of capital."

"Oh, I understand," laughed Lord Pendarvis, "which does not at all imply that he is a capital fellow. Well 'pon my word, ours is a disgraceful state of society, when money, or the reputation of it, can make such men current in it; and when three such ruffianly, and ruffianly-looking blackguards as that disgusting Duke of Twilglenon and Sir Janus Allpuff, and his little diplomatic *brouillon* of a brother, or the COURSE OF SIN BROTHERS, as they are aptly called, should

figure at 'our virtuous Court.' (Vide the newspapers.")

"Well, if they figured at it fifty times, the Court cannot confer any honor on them, they can only disgrace it, and *do*. But the career of that Course of Sin Brothers is really too cryingly infamous, even for our present era of perfectionized and triumphant vice."

"Yes, but don't you see what a *clever* dodge theirs has been; as "clever" is the patent for every iniquity in these "clever" times; the little unbottled abortion of a diplomat, married an old and ugly woman, one remove from an idiot, and into a family famed for the profligacy of its men, and the inanity of its women, and *he* continues as scavenger and doer of dirty-work-extraordinary to the dear Whigs, while his "clever" brother kicks his wife and children out of their home on a pitance insufficient to keep life and soul together, and not paying that, whenever he can invent the most extravagant pretext for so doing, and, having an infamous press-gang at his command, gets every lie and perjury that he chooses to forge, propagated and endorsed; and after having foamed a Liberal all his youth, as long as anything was to be got by it; he, in his old and landed propriety days, turns Protectionist; rats being naturally fond of corn. And so the Course of Sin Brothers between them, preserve their *own* balance of power, by doing dirty

work for both parties, and such is our highly moral state of society (!) that of course, the hagocracy of female society, like old Lady Gorgon, with her three hundred a-year pension, for having kept a Bureau de *Malfaisance* for such men, and the younger ladies in the same line, such as * *

* * * * *

&c., &c., &c., all tend to embellish our ‘virtuous Court!’ and render us eminently deserving of the title we arrogate to ourselves of—‘a moral people!’

“When our morality appears to be constructed, much on the same plan as the pompous bill of fare of our English Hotels, which comprises *every* delicacy in *words*; but the moment one comes to grapple with *facts*, they all resolve themselves into greasy mutton-chops, and tough beef-steaks, and so the morality of our *haute volée* resolves itself into cant and hypocrisy, which one must either be a born fool, or a moral ostrich, even to swallow, let alone to digest.”

“True,” said Lord “Pendarvis,” and it is the warp of this tissue of hypocrisy, and endless *seemings*, which makes us a nation of toadies, tufthunters, and sycopants; for truly, as Sydney Smith says in one of his letters to Mrs. Meywell, “Gaiety, English gaiety, is seldom come at lawfully. Friendship, or propriety, or principle, are sacrificed to obtain it, we cannot produce it without more effort

than it is worth. Our destination is to look vacant, and to sit silent."

"Yes; but even Sydney Smith himself, noble, that is, pure and single-minded, and sound-hearted as the man was on the whole, was not free from the defilement which we have high authority for knowing the contact with pitch invariably engenders, and, perhaps fashionable pitch, more than any other. What I mean with regard to Sydney Smith is, that I very much doubt, if Lady Holland had been the most outraged and injured wife in the world, and had been Mrs. Jackson, or Mrs. Thompson, or even one of the small and select family of the Smith's; and had run away from her husband, Mr. Thompson, *without* said Thompson having cut his throat as a sequel to that event, and had arrived in London with her paramour Cornet Trumpington, of the City Light Horse, or what the late Sir William Curtis used to condense into the S. L. O., and had been acting 'All for Love, or the World well lost,' in a second floor in Baker Street—I very much doubt, I say, if Sydney Smith would have even visited her *himself*, much less have allowed his wife and daughters to do so, to say nothing of the superegration of being proud of the acquaintance; but to be sure, had she been mistress to half-a-dozen men, the being mistress of Holland House would have quite altered the case, and our *moral* society

is full of such gilded anomalies, it being in English, or rather in London society, the '*local habitation and the name*' that makes either virtue or vice in our commercial estimate ; and even if we investigate the origin of a stir, or a *pretended* stir, about the reform of some crying injustice, we shall generally find that the *soi-disant* piece of magnanimous intrepidity has a corrupt source, just as Serjeant Talfourd's Custody of Infants' Bill, which might, by uninitiated innocents, have been supposed to be an act of justice to benefit a whole sex, was, in reality, a job to please a lady who had figured in a crim. con. with a Prime Minister, and has since enjoyed two retiring pensions from two different, of course *platonic*, admirers ; but when the really outraged and bitterly aggrieved of the sex submitted their cases to him, the learned serjeant had not time to hear even the outline of them, which shewed how genuine was the source of his bill and of his philanthropy ; but then, to be sure, in the case of Sir Janus Allpuff's victim, for instance, it must be remembered that the learned Serjeant wrote plays, and that Sir Janus and his clique could either puff them or d—n them ; so, of course, it was but natural that Sir Thomas Noon should prefer 'the noon of fame' to the latter risk, had the fates of all the women in Europe (always excepting that of the lady and the Premier) been thrown into the opposite balance ; and I greatly suspect that the

present pretended movement for pseudo justice for married women has a similar, and equally pure source, and that, for all the good any really injured women are likely to derive from it, they may as well sit quietly down with their outrages for the rest of their lives. Talking of that particular crim. con. of my Lord —, to give you some little idea of the sort, and altitude of infamy going on among the Gore House literary clique, which still exists *in full force*, although the temple, and the high-priest, and priestess are no more; when Sir Janus Allpuff's victim wrote her first book for bread (which was just at that time), Colburn had refused it; but no sooner had she sold it to Bull than he sent that clever, versatile, and unprincipled man, Dr. Maginn, down to where she was then living, to bribe her, by a large sum, to sell it to him, which, *not* being one of the Gore House clique, she of course refused to do. But, though he failed in his mission, the agreeable doctor remained to dinner, and gave her the whole history of how the wires were pulled upon that trial, telling her that Lord — had sent Sir — down to him, Dr. Maginn, four several times, on the night preceding it, to drive a bargain with him about getting the witness they were most afraid of out of the way, and that his (Dr. Maginn's) terms were a baronetcy (for baronetcies were cheap under the — administration) for one of his friends, a con-

sulship for another, and five hundred pounds for himself. The two former were immediately acceded to, but the latter demand was resisted as long as possible, as his lordship by no means abounded in *sterling* qualities; but it was ultimately paid at the eleventh hour, when the *honorable* doctor, having value received, undertook the necessary preliminaries of tampering with the witness at a Westminster public-house, called the Chequers, and making him so drunk as to invalidate his evidence; and who so fit, if there is any thing in example, to inculcate inebriety as was the literary doctor? But now comes the crowning infamy of the transaction, so worthy of that iniquitous clique. After having laughed over this pretty specimen of his marketable *talents*, he shewed Sir Janus's victim two articles that he had written; one for a Whig paper, making out the heroine of this crim. con. an injured angel of light; and another, with the *same* pen, and before the ink was dry on the first, for a Tory paper, dragging her through the filthiest mire, till the Red Lady of Babylon was white compared to her."

"Scoundrel!" muttered Mr. Phippen, "was not he the man who shewed that Prussic-Acid Poetess, L. E. L.'s, disgraceful letters to him, all over London?"

"Yes; and prevented her marriage with another literary "*gent*," which one must always deplore as

an invaluable chapter lost to natural history; as there is no anticipating what might have been the results of two persons of such total want of principle, and want of nose, being joined together in *unholy* matrimony. She was another choice specimen of that Gore House gang—a gang who concocted, and still concoct, every social and literary enormity in London. Sir Janus Allpuff's victim had befriended, and defended, this L. E. L. for nine years, thinking it utterly impossible that a girl of her age could be guilty of the infamies imputed to her, with that disgusting old satyr of the ———; and, pitying her forlorn position, her house was a home to this worthless creature, till, with her own eyes, she was convinced of her abandonment. However, when Sir Janus Allpuff got rid of his legal incumbrances, by turning his wife and legitimate children out of their home—this disgraceful and ungrateful creature transferred her toadyings and protestations of regard, to Sir Janus's mistress—a creature whom he christened Mrs. Beaumont, and who, with this L. E. L., was invited down to Naughtworth, by Sir Janus's mother. The moment he had turned his wife and children out of their home, *this*, the soi-disant Mrs. Beaumont makes a public boast of; and, not content with this infamy, Sir Janus palms off this wretch as a widow, and himself as the guardian of his own bastards! and so gets this creature invited into country-houses to

disseminate puffs of him, and calumnies of his legal victim. Nor is this all, the sister of this wretch, Beaumont—who had, till too old, always pursued the same loathsome trade as herself—the amiable Sir Janus established in a young ladies boarding-school, in Kensington, where she was highly recommended by Sir Janus and my Lady Blessington !! Now this, you will allow, is even worse than the Handcock affair, as ‘*Clan*’ was content with the ‘latch-key,’ without turning his wife and her children out of their home, and hunting them through the world, or driving other persons’ children into pollution by recommending them to a boarding-school kept by a prostitute.”

“GOD bless my soul, how infamous! And has there not been a life written of that Lady Blessington?”

“Yes; by a Dr. Madden, of which nothing can exceed the bad taste, and the bare-faced fictions, unless it be the bad French, and the bare-faced humbug; for his account of my Lady Blessington’s family is rather *too* ridiculous for even the puff-gulled and perjury-ridden British public to swallow; since every one, at least in Ireland, knows that her father kept a small pokey bookseller’s shop in the town of Clonmell. But even in this most disgusting book, Mr. Thackeray’s pre-eminence is made visible in his new version of *Les Pleurs D’Homère*; for my Lady Blessington’s valet-de-

chambre wrote her word, that at the sale '*M. Thackeray avait les larmes aux yeux.*' Now what on earth were the rest of the HUMBUGENCES comprising the Gore House clique about, that *they* did not turn on the water also, and set up a few tears in type."

"How disgraceful!" exclaimed Mr. Phippen; "And with such a *Bureau d'Infamie* as that Gore House going on, and all the myriad branch infamies contingent to it, we dare to call ourselves 'a moral people.'"

"Yes! the men who lead public opinion, and the women who lead society in England, will *prove* how moral we are. *Mais en revanche*, we have a million-elephant power of cant, humbug, and hypocrisy, *on all subjects, in all places, and upon every event*; and, as the natural result of this, a religious and political corruption, far exceeding what old writers tell us of the kingdom of Lao, except that with us our literati stand us in lieu of their TALOPOINS; the aforesaid literati, that is as much of it as is comprised in that execrable Gore House Clique, now calling itself 'the guild of literature,' being their own 'king,' whereas, the Talopoints, we are told, who were the priests of Lao, were only judged by the king himself; and as they performed the outward ceremony of going to confession every month, thought themselves after, free to commit every abomination with impunity; as do that branch

of our literati, provided they fire off a few fine sentiments in monthly serials, or magazines. Were the Talopoins convicted of using false money, they were sent back acquitted by *their* king, who only replied, that the seculars ought to make them greater presents. The most considerable persons in the country thought it a great honor to perform the meanest offices for the Talopoins, and none of them would wear a habit which had not been for some time worn by a Talopoin. And, so in like manner, with that particular clique; if any of them are convicted of passing base literary coin—that is, of palming off on the sapient public, other authors' ideas and words as their own genuine currency—their 'king,' to wit, *their conclave selves*, fully acquit them, and tell the assified secular public that they ought, on the contrary, bestow even more admiration on them for their *originality*! And as the Laonians would not wear a garment which had not for some time been previously worn by their omnipotent Talopoins, so neither will the British public adopt an opinion, which has not for some time been propagated by this clique of Humbugences. You are fond of theatricals, Mr. Phippen,—I have thoughts of writing a comedy in five acts, entitled—'The Four Phases, or Full Moon.' Here are my *dramatis personæ*, added Lord Pendarvis, taking a sheet of paper out of his pocket-book :

- Mrs. St. Brummagem—a saint of that ware.
 Mrs. Fitz Pusey—her married daughter, a widow.
 Charity Fitz Brummagem—her unmarried
 daughter.
 Captain Fitz Brummagem—her son in the guards.
 Tim Clover—Captain Fitz Brummagem's groom.
 The Rev. Anathema Hussfuss—The friend of the
 family.
 Sir Lycurgus Shuffleborough.
 Judas Trentelivre—a political friend.
 Lord Joan—Patron to the above.
 Parallelogram Fudge, Esq.—a philanthropist.
 Mrs. Anacharsis Cloutts Muddle—a female specimen,
 and member of "THE GREAT HUMAN FAMILY
 BORENICOPIA SOCIETY."
 Pofessor Wolfgang Von Gullthe flats—a German
 Professor.
 Marstyle, Stiltall and Leadlump—Literary "*gents*,"
 his satellites and imitators.
 Lady Di Courtman—with six marriageable, but
 still unmarried, daughters.
 Miss Celestina Shunman, their maiden Cousin,
 who, like Miss Martha Gwynne, whose epitaph
 figures at Doncaster—

—“Was so very pure within,
 She burst the outward shell of sin,
 And hatched herself a cherubim.” }

The Marquis of Plutus—an unhappy Millionnaire,
 sprunged for, sung at, ridden after, flowered,

feathered and *teared*, tarlataned, smiled, and sighed, at by Lady Di, and her six daughters."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Phippen; "when the full moon rises, your lordship may put me down for the two *avant scènes*, but look there at the real Simon Pure, the real Lord Plutus," added he, pointing to two carriages at Lady De Baskerville's door, into the first of which old Lord Celendon was being gingerly champood by Lady De Baskerville's butler and two footmen; while the second carriage, which had just driven up, was that of Sir Titaniferous Thompson, which was waiting till that of the peer had moved on.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Lord Pendarvis, "if that charming lady, Florinda Andover, marries that old zoophite—for they say he has taken enough of Morrison's pills alone, to convert him into a market garden—I'll never believe in an angel face again, but bet on Gorgons from this out."

"I'll take the odds against the zoophite," laughed Mr. Phippen; "for there is not much bridegroom jauntiness about him."

"No, but with such a managing, *clever* mother as Lady de Baskerville, she may persuade the poor girl that the most agreeable dance in the world is the *grand père*, and that *he* is the best partner for it."

"If she succeeds," rejoined Mr. Phippen, gloomily, "the girl is not worth grieving over."

“Nevertheless,” said Lord Pendarvis, “I should like to whisper in her ear some very good lines that I stumbled on lately, called—

‘BUILDING ON THE SAND.’

’Tis well to woo, ’tis good to wed,
For so the world has done
Since myrtles grew, and roses blew,
And morning brought the sun.
But have a care, ye young and fair,
Be sure ye pledge with truth;
Be certain that your love will wear
Beyond the days of youth.
For, if ye give not heart for heart,
As well as hand for hand,
You’ll find you’ve play’d the ‘unwise’ part,
And ‘built upon the sand.’
’Tis well to save, ’tis well to have,
A goodly store of gold,
And hold enough of shining stuff,—
For charity is cold.
But place not all your hope and trust,
In what the deep mine brings;
We cannot live on yellow dust,
Unmixed with purer things.
And he who piles up wealth alone,
Will often have to stand
Beside his coffer chest, and own
’Tis ‘built upon the sand.’
’Tis good to speak in kindly guise,
And soothe where’er we can;
Fair speech should bind the human mind,
And love link man to man.

But stay not at the gentle words ;
 Let *deeds* with language dwell :
 The one who pities starving birds,
 Should scatter crumbs as well.

The mercy that is warm and true,
 Must lend a helping hand ;
 For those who *talk*, yet fail to *do*,
 But ' build upon the sand.' "

" Aye, very true ; and yet, ' egad, a modern writer has well remarked, that ' it is one of the singular facts of the present state of society that the qualities which in theory we hold to be most lovely and desirable, are precisely those, which in practice we treat with the greatest contumely and disdain.' "

" That such *is* the case, no one with eyes, and ears, and observation, can deny ; but this is only more of the fungi, springing out of that accursed dry-rot of cant and hypocrisy, and thickly surrounding all the roots of the huge trunks of our social vices. Heartily do I join in Luttrell's prayer—

' Oh ! that there might in England be
 A duty on hypocrisy !
 A tax on humbug—an excise,
 A stamp on every man that canted !
 No millions more—if *these* were granted—
 Henceforward would be raised or wanted.' "

" Amen ! And now (though I am in no hurry if you have anything more to say to me), I will

wish you good morning ; and I advise you to lose no time in cautioning Lord Daventry against entering into any fresh speculations with Sir Titaniferous Thompson ; and—but this is strictly *entre nous*—if he banks with Dobs, Thompson, and Dobs, it might be quite as well, if he did not leave any very large amount in their hands. At the same time, of course he will not withdraw it in any way that can arouse their suspicions as to his doubts of their solvency ; *vous comprenez ; au sage un demi mot* —— ?”

“Thank you, my dear Sir, a thousand times,” said the young man, shaking Mr. Phippen cordially by the hand. “You may rely upon my neither betraying nor abusing your confidence.”

And so saying, they parted ; Mr. Phippen continuing his way back to Bond Street, and Lord Pendarvis re-entering his father’s house, where his endeavours to dissuade Lord Daventry from entering into Sir Titaniferous Thompson’s speculation were VERY SUCCESSFUL.

Slowly and thoughtfully, Sir Titaniferous Thompson ascended Lady De Baskerville’s staircase ; his head and eyes bent downwards, which totally divested him of the consequential strut which *parvenus*, poetasters, and villains, generally adopt to supply them, as they think, with that respect-compelling dignity, which Nature has denied them.

“Sir Titaniferous Thompson—my lady,” said the groon of the chambers, throwing open the doors.

Lady De Baskerville, instad of being seated in her velvet *bergère*, half-reclining, after her usual languid, semi-regal fashion, was pacing up and down the room; her voice raised, her face flushed, and her whole manner much excited, while in her right hand she grasped, and occasionally shook, with tremulous passion, a much-crumpled letter.

Lady Florinda, on the contrary, looked like the embodied calm of a summer's evening, as she sat creating mimic flowers at an embroidery frame; for of all the illuminations for the peace, the one of happiness that now lit up that beautiful face of hers, was unquestionably the brightest; and, without even pretending to *clairvoyance*, any one passing at the back of her chair might have seen, besides the delicate tracery left by the shadows of the lace of her chemisette, on her slightly-heaving bosom, something very like a ship-letter between it, and her stays.

“To think of such folly! such disobedience! such ingratitude!—and the expense I have been at to forward your happiness! your interests; and how——”

“Indeed, dear mamma,” interrupted Florinda, “I am sorry you should have put yourself to any expense on my account; and, you know, every

time you made dinner parties for Lord Celendon, I entreated you not to do so, for I told you from the first, I *never* would, or could, marry him."

"You told me! Well, now I tell *you*!" exclaimed the indignant Dowager, while the lightning of indignation corruscated from every feature, and the words seemed actually to hiss from her mouth, as if a bar of red-hot iron had suddenly been plunged into water. "Yes, I tell it you, and will never cease telling it you, that, with *my* consent, you never shall marry that penniless, upstart pauper—Harcourt Penrhyn!"

"Oh, mamma!" said the daughter, laying down her needle and thimble, and, for the first time, reflecting back a momentary flash of her mother's bitter indignation; "my cousin Harcourt is *no* upstart, he has already made for himself a name, and a fame, that may well make us proud of being able to claim relationship with him; and you could not speak more slightly of him if he were an apothecary's boy, as grandpapa Penrhyn was; and though his father *was* the son of an apothecary, yet his mother is of a far better, and older family than even the Andovers."

"This! to my face, insolent, ungrateful viper! Leave the room, Madam; and don't presume to add insolence, to ingratitude."

Lady Florinda could not exactly see *what* she had to be grateful for, in her mother having jilted

an honest man, to marry the honourable Palmy-tongue Andover, (for that much of the family history had come to her knowledge through Harcourt) or in wanting to force her to do the same by marrying that fine modern edition of Methuselah, Lord Celendon; but being only too happy to get back to her own room, to re-read Harcourt's last letter, she instantly, and without another word, obeyed Lady De Baskerville's command; and was in the act of rising to do so, when the doors were thrown open, and Sir Titaniferous was announced. Florinda hastily retreated through another door, and left her mother to receive this living comment on her own plebeian origin, which she did, with anything but a good grace.

"My dear Lady De Baskerville," said the brand-new baronet, extending his hand, for he never ventured on any more familiar address—"I fear I am intruding?"

Nevertheless, like Paul Pry, all in hoping he did *not* intrude, he drew a chair, and persevered in doing so.

"Oh," cried the lady, flinging herself into, rather than seating herself in a fauteuil, "you are very happy, Sir Titaniferous, not to have any children."

"Expensive, certainly," rejoined that great man, flantically and financially, as he lifted up his coat-tails to prevent any of that crumpling, so obnoxious to Sybarites in broad cloth "but," added he, with

a mingled air of pedigree and patriotism, (!) a pity too, when a title becomes extinct in an aristocratic country like ours—à *propos* (of titles perhaps)? I thought I saw Lord Celendon's carriage drive away, as I got to your door. I hope all is going on well between him and my pretty cousin, and that we shall soon have a coronet the more in the family."

Lady De Baskerville, having hurled a visual thunderbolt at him for this ill-advised familiarity of the "*pretty cousin*," and "*the family*," now fairly burst into tears of irrepressible rage, as she exclaimed—

"Poor Lord Celendon has been grossly insulted this very morning;—refused, actually refused! by that silly and misguided girl, though the settlements he offered were magnificent, positively magnificent! a jointure of twenty-two thousand a year."

"And every prospect of speedily enjoying it," put in the practical Sir Titaniferous."

"Exactly what I have been telling her; but I have only De Baskerville to thank for it all, his taking her in that shameful manner, (without even asking my leave) to the Crimea, where the very thing I most dreaded and disliked, came to pass; they made the acquaintance of that Harcourt Penrhyn, and he had actually the impertinence to make love to, and propose for, Florinda."

The baronet raised his eyebrows, and shrugged his shoulders, as if he had suddenly heard that the three per cents had fallen below zero ; but in words, he had recourse to emollients, of which he appeared to have an hereditary knowledge. “No match for Lady Florinda Andover, certainly,” said he, “but still, I must say, that Captain Penrhyn bids fair to rise rapidly in his profession ; for dine where one will, one hears nothing but his praises, even at the best houses.”

“Praises!” echoed his companion, pettishly kicking away the velvet *tabouret* at her feet, although *it* had *not* obtruded any opinion on the subject ; “praises! can one live on praises? *You*, of all people in the world, ought to know Sir Titaniferous that one cannot.”

Now, though Sir Titaniferous had never been in a position to try the experiment, he instantly, with theoretical perspicuity, decided upon its impracticability, and so replied—

“No, no, clearly not ; only as stepping-stones : the praises, and patronage of the great, you know, my dear Lady De Baskerville, must necessarily lead to preferment, and—and—in short, to substantial benefits.”

“I know no such thing! On the contrary, it is patent, that they never lead to anything, except to a ruinous expense that poor people cannot afford. Read the lives of Sheridan, Theodore Hooke,

Moore, and Sydney Smith. What did the great people with whom they dined, and for whom they jested, and jeopardised their scanty patrimonies, do for them? It is true, that posterity is duly informed that 'Lady Lansdowne called, and left a tuber rose for Bessy,' and that 'Lady Holland brought Sydney Smith's children some presents from Paris; still, Sheridan, Theodore Hook, and Tommy Moore, died beggars; and Sydney Smith did *not* die a bishop; and if he also did not die a beggar, no thanks to the magnates, whom he feasted with wit and wisdom; and, who thought they gave him value received in turtle and venison; as tavern-keeper's do for the golden guineas they receive for public dinners. No, no, Sir Titaniferous; I have not lived so long in the London world without knowing that the friendship (?) of the great, will never take a sufficiently sterling shape to procure even salt, much less bread, for poverty; that is, for intellectual poverty. But all this, only makes Lady Florinda's conduct the more unpardonable and abominable; and truly, it may well be said, that misfortunes never come singly; for, as if her rejection of Lord Celendon was not enough, and all the difficulties I have been plunged into, in my efforts to make the house agreeable to him, I, this morning, get a letter from that bearish old Mr. Phippen, reminding me that the money he had advanced to me on my diamonds was now due, but *kindly* giving me two additional

months to pay it in. To think that the ingratitude and disobedience of a daughter should place me in such a degraded position, as to put me under obligations *to a man of that sort!* For, had Flo' married Lord Celendon, as I fully intended she should, and, as (if she had a spark of proper feeling in her) she *would* have done—out of her two thousand pounds a year pin-money, the first year of which she could not possibly want, I should have borrowed this money from her, for this Mr. Phippen, which is what I had all along calculated upon doing. Cannot *you* devise any plan to help me, Sir Titaniferous, you, who have such a genius for finance?" added the great lady, softening in her tone, and almost scycophantising in her manner, as she looked her ugly little ignoble nephew full in the face—*you* who have been so *very successful!*"

"I sincerely wish, my dear Lady De Baskerville," said he, responding to the appeal by advancing his chair three inches nearer to hers, "that I *could* discharge this trifling debt for you myself immediately; but the fact is, I have just embarked, I may say, my *all* in a colossal enterprise (Sir Titaniferous always carefully avoided the *word* speculation), which I wished to *secure* before it got into the market, and thereby forestall the Rothschilds and Barings; and though, in a short time, it *cannot fail* to return me two hundred per

cent., yet, for the moment, it leaves me as poor as a church mouse."

"Dear me!" sighed Lady De Baskerville, "I wish I had such chances of making money—how lucky you are Sir Titaniferous."

"*Prudent*, only prudent, my dear *aunt*." The freedom of the latter word, he well knew, even if it excited her displeasure, was the best talisman he could have possibly used for inspiring her with confidence, for, though familiarity breeds contempt, wealth, he was perfectly aware, authorises familiarity, or any other vice.

"Cannot you put *me* in the way of being prudent too?" rejoined she, almost coaxingly; "but I suppose you would despise a paltry couple of hundred pounds, or else I really would sell some bracelets or things to have a venture in your El Dorado."

The millionaire, of course, looked as if he *did* despise anything so impalpably minute as a brace of hundred pounds; but suddenly checking himself, as if the *look* had been involuntary, and his *feeling* was all benevolence, and interest, (irrespective of capital), he said, with a meditative air to the accompaniment of a sigh—

"Unfortunately it requires thousands, before any commensurate advantage can be reaped."

"Ah! then there's an end of it; for thousands, alas! I have not."

Both were silent for a few seconds ; when the baronet, placing the fore-finger of his right hand on his forehead, suddenly exclaimed—

“I have it—the very thing!—it will not only make *your* fortune but Lady Florinda’s.”

“Oh! my *dear* Titaniferous!” (without the *Sir*) said she, clasping her hands in a sort of extacy meant to express both hope and gratitude, as she arose, and, with her own fair hands, let down the *portière* lest they should be over-heard, “what *do* you mean?”

“Why look here,” said he, making, with a pencil, some hasty and purely mythological sums of addition on the back of a letter, “Lady Florinda’s twenty thousand pounds, in four months, with the interest and compound interest, will just produce, if invested in this enterprise, forty thousand two hundred pounds.”

“Oh! but it is Flo’s fortune you know, and I have no right to speculate with her money,” said the mother, drawing back with a sort of instinctive horror.

“My dear Lady De Baskerville, *I never speculate*,” said the nephew, with a contemptuous shrug, as he hastily replunged the letter, with the chimerical thousands on it, into his waistcoat pocket.

“Well, but,” rejoined the aunt, deliberating previous to being lost, “let us consult Florinda,

she *may* be very glad to get such immense interest for her money."

"Hush! not for the world!" said he, first raising the fore-finger of his right hand to the side of his nose, and then hastily buttoning up both his trouser-pockets, as if they already contained, not only the 'open sesame,' but the actual wealth, of this golden enterprise. "Not for the world; young persons are not to be trusted with such matters; and, indeed, in confiding it to your ladyship, I have been guilty of an indiscretion which, if known to the other directors, might be my ruin; but my anxiety to serve you, got the better of my prudence, and you must give me your solemn word of honor that you will *not* breath this matter to mortal?"

"You are very safe, for I don't yet know what it is."

"Ah! true," smiled the millionaire, as if apparently recovering his serenity with his security; and then, knowing from experience that in angling for gudgeons, when you have baited the hook, the best way is to go away and leave it to be nibbled at, without, from being over anxious, casting your own shadow on the water. He looked at the time-piece, and exclaimed, suddenly rising, "Bless me! I shall be late, it wants a quarter to three, and I was to have met Mr. Jericho Jabber at a political meeting of our joint constituents in the Borough."

"But—but"—hesitated Lady De Baskerville,

replying to her own thoughts, "I have no right to invest Flo's money without consulting her."

As her guardian, you have not only a right, but are in duty bound to do what is most advantageous for her; and as she will not be of age for six months, only think what a thing it will be to double—nay, to more than double—her capital in four!"

"Ah! but ——"

"Well, I must be off," said the nephew, affecting express-train haste, as he held out one finger to his lady aunt, as *other* great people were in the habit of doing to him; and still Lady De Baskerville mused, till he had reached the door, when she said—

"Stay one moment; are you *quite* sure that the capital *will* be doubled?"

"My dear *aunt*, am I quite sure that your name is Dora? and that you are the Countess De Baskerville?"

She herself was so sure of both those facts, that she arrived at the conclusion that the monetary sequence was equally indisputable; and, moreover, Titaniferous *never speculated!* And yet, how Titaniferous *had* got on in the world! and when *that* is the case, one *must* be safe in embarking in the same boat with a person, even if that boat were steered by Charon, and being ferried across the Styx. And so the die was cast, and poor Florinda's

all staked!—with a swindler,—who had been so VERY SUCCESSFUL!

“Then if I make up my mind to follow your advice, can you conclude the matter to-morrow, Sir Titaniferous?” said she, a shade paler than usual.

“To-day. Now, my dear Lady De Baskerville,” said the obliging baronet, returning, “if you will give me an order on your broker to sell out Lady Flo’s twenty thousand ——?”

And as her ladyship turned to a little *sèvre* and marquetric cabinet, which she unlocked, and from which she took a cheque-book, Sir Titaniferous drew from *his* pocket a sheaf of shares, and prospectuses, of the grand Duchy of Swilland-smokem Lead Mines, which most fortunately! and unaccountably (?) he happened to have with him. When Lady De Baskerville had filled in, the required number, which was to put her and Florinda in possession of such *fabulous* wealth, the benevolent being, who was helping them to it, said—

“’Pon honor I have done rather an unfair thing, my dear aunt; for those shares that I have let *you* have—strictly speaking—belong to Lord Daventry; but blood is thicker than water, so *he* must only wait a little longer for his.”

And so saying, and generously to avoid any expression of his relative’s gratitude for thus favouring her, he made a precipitate retreat, ostensibly to

reach in time the political meeting in the Borough ; and as the *parvenu* M.P. descended the *parvenue* peeress's Axminster-carpeted stairs, to the clanging of the silver-sounding bell that announced his departure. Once more his head was in the air, and Sir Titaniferous Thompson strutted, every inch a senator !—since of such materials our senators are now composed. And yet one Père Millot—erst of the academy of Dijon—expresses himself to the following effect, touching Montesquieu :—“ Those rules of conduct, those maxims of government, which should be engraved on the thrones of kings, and on the hearts of every one invested with authority ; is it not to a close study of men we owe them ? Witness that illustrious patriot, that interpreter, that judge of the laws on whose tomb France, and all Europe shed tears, but whose genius will ever be seen to instruct nations, tracing the plan of public happiness ; that immortal writer, who abridged everything, who was for putting us upon *thinking*, as what we stand more in want of than reading. With what sagacity he had studied human nature ! Travelling like Solon, meditating like Pythagoras, conversing like Plato, reading like Cicero, writing like Tacitus ; his continued object was man. Men he studied and knew. The fertile seeds already are seen to germinate which *he* cast into the minds of the chiefs of nations and the rulers of empires. Let us

gratefully reap the fruits." And after refuting a dangerous paradox of Bayle, does he not also add—"The principles of Christianity, well engraved on the heart, would be infinitely stronger than the false honor of monarchies, the human virtues of republics, and the servile fear of despotic states, which is stronger than the three principles of political government laid down in the spirit of the laws."

But what have *we* now of all this? Utilitarianism has converted all that is high, pure, good, and noble in human nature—all that *might* have been great—into a social, politico-commercial guano, for producing the greatest possible *quantities* of everything, without the slightest reference to *quality*; and to obtain this statistical guano, there has been entailed upon us an interminable Chancery suit of

Mammon, *versus* Merit;

The infallible results of which are, John Sadliers, John Dean Pauls, William Palmers, Jericho Jabbers, Janus Allpuffs, and Titaniferous Thompsons; for as long as men can, with impunity, (as they now do,) violate every *private* virtue, they may, to forward their worldly ends, *assume*, but can never be capable of any *public* virtue; though this is only an additional reason, under our present system of private vice, and public clap-trap, why such men are all, and always, **VERY SUCCESSFUL!**

CHAPTER IX.

In which the fast Mr. Montague Sedgemore astonishes the slow Mr. Cam Deuens, the more so, perhaps, by convincing him that an apparent slight may often be an act of real kindness.—Mr. Whippen loses a key, and gains a wrinkle.



E! he! he! tittered Mr. Sedgemore. Hi! hi! hi! falsettoed Mr. Jones. Ha! ha! ha! contro-bassoed Mr. Smith; as the former, perched on his high office-stool within his desk, was, with one

pen behind his ear, and another in his hand, doing *croquis* of Miss Susannah Simmons upon a fly-leaf of his ledger, while Messieurs Smith and Jones, in no way proud (though they *did* dine at Sir Titaniferous Thompson's, and figured at what *they* denominated "*the West End*") were "*assisting*"

him by giggling at his performance. At an opposite desk sat Tom Levens making double entries, but neither of Simmons's, nor Susannah's, but of pounds, shillings, and pence, three per cent. consols, Russia, India, and Spanish bonds, with variations on other "fugitive pieces;" but, every now and then, he was obliged to have recourse to his pen-knife, from having made some slight error in his entry, evidently disturbed by the giggling going on opposite; and then, all in making the necessary erasures, he would suddenly knit his brow, as if, like poor Master Simeon, the second usher, in James White's rare merry story of "John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster," he thought "that of all inferior noises, tittering was the most offensive;" for, as in the case of Simeon, his nerves were unequal to it, and he also opined that it "undermined that importance and respectability which were the corner-stones of his calling, and disconcerted the grave deportment which he thought it becoming to assume, and was altogether more than a man of his beard could well put up with." But Messieurs Smith and Jones prepared to depart, after a great deal of whispering had been added to the giggling, in which the words "Golden Pippin"—"leave it at the White Hart"—"Monday night," and "Cremorne" escaped, and flew over as far as Mr. Levens' desk; and, there being no pen behind *his* ear to bayonet them back, they entered, and he

distinctly heard them, but concluded that they merely referred to one of those frequent "larks," as Mr. Sedgemore called them (no doubt with reference to their *nocturnal* attributes), in which he was in the habit of indulging; and having found it impossible either to ensnare, or engage, his colleague to join in them, he had left off announcing any of his projects of pleasure to him. Messieurs Smith and Jones, "the two *West End gents*," as Mr. Sedgemore denominated them, having taken their departure, after having made Mr. Levens a bow that almost amounted to impertinence from its mock respect, the latter quietly resumed his writing, and, for a few seconds a profound silence reigned unbroken, save by the scratching of his pen, when all of a sudden Mr. Sedgemore, with his right hand to the side of his mouth, called out, in a stentorian voice, as if he had been hailing a man-of-war on the high seas—

"Hallo! Levens, my boy, now be sociable for once; and, as you seem to be so thick with him, and in his confidence, do unlock, and tell us what the *guv'nor* does so often down at Brentford—that is, *who* he goes to see there?"

"I fear you must have a very low opinion of me, Sedgemore, to suppose that, even if I were cognizant of Mr. Phippen's movements, I should repay his great kindness to me by becoming a spy upon his actions. I leave spying and every other species of

blackguardism to '*gentlemen.*' Such practices do not become men of my humble position; and, moreover, *you* go to Brentford quite as often as I do, and, therefore, are likely to know as much of what goes on there as me, as I understand you are constantly giving dinners at the 'White Hart.'

"Oh! I understand," said Mr. Sedgemore, winking his right eye, and spreading his hand out over his heart like "—— Browne," "*you* are wounded in the tenderest *pint*, eh?—'case as *how* the dinners *ain't* given at the 'Four Alls.' Well, I'm free to confess, as they say in Parliament, when they are going to conceal the truth in the best manner they can, that it *don't look* friendly that I should patronise the 'White Hart' when the 'Four Alls' is so near; but you, Levens, who have been a literary cove, and accustomed to do the articles in the moral and magnanimous line,—you ought to know better than to judge by appearances; and though you're not a fellow that one ever gets on with, on account of a sort of five-barred-gate grandity kind of manner that you have, yet, having a great respect for virtue and all that sort of thing, it is on account of the regard I have for you that I did *not* go to the 'Four Alls.'

Tom Levens raised his eyes, and looked a note of interrogation, but did not condescend to utter it.

"Ah! I see that confounded dot and carry one

has dulled your capacity for figurative eloquence ; but," added he, drawing a long narrow slip of blueish ruled paper out of his pocket, about a yard in length, and holding it up, "it is a true bill, for all that. Ahem! 'Montague Sedgemore, Esq.;' that reads devilish well. 'Montague Sedgemore, Esq., debtor to John Newcome'—ahem! Well, I needn't read you the items. Dinners are always cold on paper, and wines flat. 'Total £16 8s. 4d.' *Now* do you take?"

"Why, yes ; that you must have been a very profitable customer to Mr. Newcome."

"Wrong for once. Guess again."

"I'm sure I can't guess what you had for so many pounds, if you mean that."

"No, I don't mean that, for *now* that's neither here nor there ; but you see *I* have got this bill?"

"Yes."

"Well, don't you wish Mr. Newcome may get it? That's all. So now I hope you will have the decency to thank me for not having gone to the 'Four Alls;' and again, the fast Mr. Sedgemore winked his eye knowingly, as he replunged the bill back into his pocket.

"Good GOD! but that's swindling!" said Tom Levens, with unaffected horror.

"Ah! I believe that *is* the old-fashioned English name given to it in dictionaries," said Mr. Sedgemore, nonchalantly paring his nails with a

pen-knife ; “but *we* call it ‘doing the flats ;’ and you know my dear fellow, or you don’t seem to know yet, but I have no doubt you will by and bye, that the opera of life is composed of flats, sharps, and *naturals* ;” and he emphasised the last word, looking his companion pointedly, and somewhat impertinently, full in the face.

Tom Levens looked, and felt, exceedingly uncomfortable. He did not like the idea of turning informer against even a person of such lax morality as Mr. Sedgemore ; still less did he like the idea of Mr. Phippen having such a person in his employment, and therefore, to a certain degree in his confidence ; so as a *mezzo-termine*, he determined to watch him narrowly.

“Never look so glum, man ; when I’m a millionaire I may relent, and pay Newcome. And Smith, and Jones, have put me on the scent of a goldmine ; so *that* even, may come to pass sooner than you think. But *mum’s* the word, for if the *guv’nor* gets wind of it, it will be no go.”

“I think you had better take care what you are about, Sedgemore, and look before you leap ; for, depend upon it, if there was anything likely to be so profitable, Mr. Phippen would know of it before either Mr. Smith or Jones could possibly do so.”

“That shews how much *you* know about it. Why, Mr. Phippen is only a grub ; Smith and Jones are all among the tip-top butterflies ; the

big-wigs of bullion dine constantly at Sir Titaniferous Thompson's,—are intimate with the Barings, and are obliged to be quite cool to the Rothschilds, on account of the females of the family looking rabbis and synagogues at 'em, in the way of Levitical laws, marriage contracts, and ecclesiastical entanglements; and even Jericho Jabber has cast a jew's-eye at 'em, to give 'em places in the Treasury, when he comes into *hoffice* again."

"*When he does*, he may fairly promise to make them Premier, and Secretary-at-War; in short, anything,—but honest men," said Levens.

"What! Suppose *you* don't think Smith and Jones have got talents enough for *hoffice*."

"Oh, yes, I do! for a little goes a great way in England to qualify men for the management of state affairs; for England is not like China."

"How do you mean—not like China?"

"Why the Chinese are so *exigeant* that they insist upon having *two* kinds of ministers: the one are the signing ministers, who grant audiences and sign papers; but the other are distinguished from these, as *the thinking ministers*, and have the care of forming projects, examining those who present them, and proposing such changes as times, and circumstances, require to be made in the administration. Now, it is very clear, that *we* neither have, nor exact, any such ministers as these in

England, which very much simplifies the qualifications for office."

"Well, I don't wonder at your being hard upon them, for I know you were d—d ill used by those literary-politico coves,—and it is impossible to speak or think well of people who turn the screw too tight upon us."

"Why Sedgemore, you are quite a philosopher, for *that's* exactly what Hobbes says,—that 'our hatred or love, is an effect of the good, or harm, we have received;' and he also adds, that 'among the savages, the only wicked man is the robust man; while in civilized states, the only wicked man is the man in power.'"

"Oh! if you begin talking of Hobbes, it's time to look after the kettle; and that reminds me, I am to *tea* at the Simmons's, and it only wants a quarter to six now," said Mr. Sedgemore, looking at the office-clock, and then adding, as he took down his hat off of a peg, and smoothed it with his elbow, "but I say Levens, -'though on pleasure I am bent, I have a frugal mind,' and though I do *not* patronise the 'Four Alls' for my *petty dinny's fang*,—as the *nobs* call 'em,—yet I am quite ready to save my clothes in '*domestic retirement*' sometimes, and do you a good turn into the bargain; so any day and night next week that you like to ask the *guv'nor* for a '*oliday*, I'll stay and do *dooty*

in your stead ; only let me know before-hand: Monday would be most convenient to me, because *Susanner hain't* booked me for *nothing* on *that* evening."

Tom Levens thanked him, coldly enough, and said he would give him due notice if he wanted to avail himself of his offer ; and no sooner had Mr. Sedgemore's white hat appeared above the window as he passed up the street on his way to Miss Simmons's tea party, than he added, "What *can* he want to get me out of the way for ? He must have some motive in it, as for the whole twelve-months that I have sat behind this desk he never before offered to take my place in order that I might have a holiday. I must, without informing him of my suspicions, give Dutton a hint to keep a sharp look-out."

Now it was customary for Tom Levens and Sedgemore to sleep alternate nights at the office in Threadneedle Street, and Dutton was a detective officer, who slept there every night.

Having formed this resolution, Levens closed his ledger, placed it within its own particular pigeon-hole, and then re-seated himself at the desk, took a sheet of paper, and began writing a letter, but had not written many lines before he seemed to require to refer to another ; and, accordingly, he withdrew one from his bosom. But unless Mr. Phippen, in his numerous commercial

transactions, had had dealings with some hair merchant in *La Haute Bretagne*, this could not have been from one of *his* correspondents, as it contained a long lock of soft-silken, dark brown hair, which seemed to have a shade of sadness running through it; and such, in truth, *might* have been cast upon it from the tarlatan foliage of a widow's cap, under which it had long grown; for we may as well tell the truth at once: During the year that Tom Levens had been in Mr. Phippen's employment, that gentleman had had frequent occasion to send him on embassies, down to Hazeltree Cottage, thinking him a safe and trustworthy person so to do; he had also, as a plausible pretext for augmenting his stipend, deputed him to impart, by colloquial means, a thorough knowledge of French and Italian to Robert Chatterton, and to further officiate as *cornac* to the latter, in taking him country walks, whenever Christ's hospital or Threadneedle Street did not require the presence of either. The consequence was, that the boy got exceedingly fond of him, and the mother naturally caught the infection, the first symptoms of which manifested themselves in a strong attack of gratitude; so that whenever Tom Levens appeared as *chargé d'affaires* from Mr. Phippen, at Hazeltree Cottage, there were always active preparations of a hospitable nature for his reception, till tea—however well it may grow in China—he began to think could only

be *made* at Hazeltree Cottage. Cherries, strawberries, peas, plums, and flowers, in his *borné* experience, also confining their capabilities of perfection to the same locality; so that at length it fell out that, even when Mr. Phippen did *not* send him, this exemplary young man—so little did he spare himself, or grudge either time or trouble—would occasionally go down there of his own accord, either to bring a *bulletin* of Bob, who had walked six miles, and despatched twelve buns after it; or to enquire if Mrs. Chatterton and her mother might happen to have any message to Mr. Phippen, and be at a loss for a messenger; or if Sarah Nash wanted any more Glenfield starch, or Tim was getting too fat for his collar, and it wanted any alteration of—all which commissions certainly *might* have been executed at Brentford; but of *course* not so well as in London. And then, it would also sometimes fall out, upon these impromptu visits of his to Hazeltree Cottage, that he would see the *silhouette* of a widow's cap at the window, as if the wearer was actually expecting, and looking out for him, whereupon, poor Tom Levens' heart would turn Ethiopian Serenader, and thump out—

“ I see her now ! I see her now !

I see her at the window ;

She looks so sweet, she's dress'd so neat,

I'd give my heart to win her.”

Win her, it would appear in negro nepenthes, doing duty as rhyme to *window*. However, whatever was the rhyme, that apparition at the window was always the *reason* of terrible palpitations of the heart to poor Tom Levens; so much so indeed, that for several seconds after entering the cottage, he could not speak, which greatly alarmed the widow, who would bring him a glass of bright, clear, cold water, and look so earnestly into his face while he drank it, hoping that that would make him better, that on more than one occasion he had a great mind to tell her that he should never be better if she looked at him in that way, as it made the thumping at his heart return with double force, and was altogether as contradictory a mode of proceeding, as if a poacher were to attempt to lull a covey of partridges to sleep by discharging a double-barrelled rifle amongst them. But it is a long lane that has no turning; and even *Lad-lane* is no exception to this rule. So one evening, the widow and Tom Levens were exchanging their *adieux* after tea; the sun going down and the moon rising up, and still he lingered; and whether it was the tea which had been unusually strong, or the cream that had been unusually thick, or the lock of dark-brown hair that looked unusually glossy, as it stray'd out of bounds, or all and each of these separately, or combined, that did it; but Mr. Phippen's modest, moral, particularly civil

clerk, became all of a sudden, most unwarrantably meddling and morose; boldly declaring in the most abrupt manner that *he* thought a widow's cap the most unbecoming thing in creation, and if *he* could have *his* way *she* should not wear it another minute. And then the widow sighed, and so did he; and then he thought he could not do better than endeavour to prove to her, by logical demonstration, as he was in the habit of doing to Bob in other matters, that as two negatives make an affirmative, so two sighs, if properly commingled, make a kiss; and he having employed that electric-telegraph, there is no use in our loitering by the way. There were only Mr. and Mrs. Levens, senior, and Mr. Phippen, now to be consulted, and though both agreed that this was necessary, neither seemed in a hurry to consult them. Indeed *that* evening was frittered away in tautological thanks on the part of Mrs. Chatterton, for the great care and kindness Mr. Levens had been good enough to show Robert. But Mr. Levens assured her, that the mere excursion-ticket intercourse of an occasional walk in the fields did not give sufficient scope for either, but that the moment he had shares in him, she would then see how that care and attention should be augmented. With regard to the lock of dark-brown hair that has just been seen in the letter, *that* is easily accounted for; as where needle-work is about, there is always sure to be at least

one pair of scissors, which is as convenient as a post-office, where love-making is going on; and so, that very same evening that refractory lock that would *not* wear a widow's cap was severed by Tom Levens with the very identical scissors that had cut out that cap—

SUCH, IS RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE!

And from that day forth it was regularly transferred to *the last letter*. This last letter was now in progress of being answered; and though this was only Wednesday, the writer with the wings of hope, soared into the far-future of four whole days, and nights, and announced his advent for the following Sunday, at Hazeltree Cottage, but this was only the *motivo*, which was followed by divers variations, all in the same key; which though thought exceedingly delightful by the person for whom they were composed, might not be equally so to every ear. At length the letter came to an end, because the paper had done so; and, that paper has its limits, is doubtless a wise provision of nature or art (?) instituted expressly with a view to bringing love-letters to a conclusion. Just as the writer was in the act of sealing this one, the office-door opened, and Mr. Phippen made his appearance, surprised at seeing him at that unusual hour. Tom Levens hastily descended from his high stool, and inquired if he wanted anything.

“Eh? ’egad! yes, Levens; I can’t imagine how I

came to be so silly. Absence in young fellows like you, is easily accounted for, and very excusable, but I am old enough to know better; and I must have left my watch either on the table here, or on the table in the dressing-closet, when I went in to wash my hands and put on a clean neckcloth before I went away to-day."

"There is only one comfort, Sir," said Tom Levens, commencing his search on the large office-table, at which Mr. Phippen always wrote, "if you left it anywhere here, it is safe. I only hope you may not have lost it in an omnibus."

"No, no, Tom; I walked home," said he, joining in the search; "and I only missed it when I wanted the Bramah key of my desk; for you know I wear that and the key of the iron safe here, to my watch-chain, and I have a perfect recollection of having taken out the watch and laid it down somewhere, but whether it was here, or in the next room, I can't exactly remember."

"It is not here, Sir," said Levens, taking up and shaking the last packet of papers, and then even looking in the waste-paper basket. "I'll go and look in the dressing-room."

And accordingly to the dressing-room they both went, and the portly watch and its appendages were soon discovered, lying on the top of a small chest of drawers, near the wash-hand stand.

"That's all right," cried Mr. Phippen, taking

possession of it; "but 'Gad, as I am here, I may as well lock up these letters," added he, taking a packet out of his pocket; and they both returned into the office, and Mr. Phippen walked to the iron safe, and began unlocking it; but the key, which though a comparatively small one for so large a lock, generally opened with such ease, now refused to turn in the lock. Mr. Phippen took it out and examined the wards, when he discovered the impediment to consist in a small piece of wax which blocked up one of the interstices. "'Gad, that's odd too," said he, removing it, and placing it in a piece of paper which he put into his waistcoat pocket. "Have you been in the office ever since I left to-day, Levens?"

"Yes, Sir, except for about a quarter of an hour at four o'clock, when I went out to post some letters."

"And who did you leave here when you went to the post?"

"Sedgemore, Sir."

"Humph! and was he alone when you came back?"

"No, Sir, there were two persons with him, a Mr. Smith, and a Mr. Jones."

"Who are they?"

"Well I don't exactly know, Sir; but I believe they are friends of Sir Titaniferous Thompson."

"How the deuce did Sedgemore become acquainted with them?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Sir, but he appears to be very intimate with them?"

"Oh! he does, eh?" and Mr. Phippen pulled his right ear and mused for a few seconds, and then said—"I tell you what, Levens, I wish you'd put on your hat, take a cab and go to Chubb's, and bring back a man *with* you directly, with several locks on the same plan as this one—that is, large triple or quadruple locks with small keys. 'Gad! I'll have this lock changed."

"I think you are right, Sir."

"Why, do *you* suspect anything, Levens? 'Pon my life I begin to think you do."

"No, Sir; only I don't know what to make of that piece of wax being wedged between the wards of that key, for had it fallen accidentally from a candle it would have been on the surface."

"Right, Tom; so it behoves me to *wax* cautious."

"Why, with so many papers and other things of such immense value, I think it does, Sir," said the former, as he put on his hat and left the office. In little more than half an hour he returned with a lock-smith and an assortment of locks.

"You must take care, my man," said Mr. Phippen to the smith, "to put *on* a lock as different from the one you take off, as possible."

"This one, Sir, is quite as secure, if not more so than yours; but it is on a totally different

principle, and that key of your old lock would not even go in, much less turn in it," and the smith filed and screwed, and screwed and filed away at the ponderous lock, as expeditiously as possible, so that at the expiration of an hour he had taken off the old one and put on the new; which old lock, with the key, Mr. Phippen placed inside the safe, where he found all his deeds, documents, and other matters intact.

"Thank you, much obleeged to you; here's half-a-crown for yourself, and send me the bill of the lock."

"I return you many thanks, Sir," said the smith, gathering up his tools and basket, and pulling the fore-lock of his hair as he made his exit.

"Now, Tom," said Mr. Phippen, as he attached the new key to his watch-chain, "tell me what you suspect; for, for some time past, it has struck me that you had something on your mind."

But Tom Levens, who determined not to communicate his suspicions till they were converted into certainties, but to narrowly watch his fellow clerk on all occasions, merely replied, as he cast down his eyes, and advanced the tip of his right boot, with geometrical exactness, to a parallelogram in the pattern of the floor-cloth—

"Well, Sir, as you have been good enough to take sufficient interest in me to remark it, I *have*

had something on my mind, but it only relates to my own affairs, Sir; for, with regard to yours, you may rely upon my vigilance in not losing sight of them night or day, and till I have something more than suspicions to go upon, I would rather keep *them* to myself."

"I've nothing to say against *that*, Tom, as I approve of it entirely," said Mr. Phippen, seating himself in his green Morocco easy-chair, and leaning back in it, to show that he was in no hurry, but, with his usual kindness, was ready and willing to hear whatever concerned or affected the person addressing him.

"You are very good, Sir," said Tom Levens, hastily drawing back the point of his boot from that particular parallelogram, as if it had been a bait, and that something had suddenly nibbled at it. "Very good; and, indeed, but for your goodness to everybody, and—and—more particularly to—to—somebody,——" but here he could get no farther, and fairly broke down, like some Parliamentary orator, who had suddenly forgotten one of the chief "*hits*" in his long and elaborately prepared impromptu speech.

"Oh!" said Mr. Phippen, with a malicious twinkle in his eye, as he plunged three of the fingers of both hands into his waistcoat pockets, instead of holding out a helping hand to his poor clerk, "so there is a *somebody* in the case? Well,

Tom, every one knows their own affairs best ; but I have always understood—however, mind you, I only go by hearsay—that those *somebodies*, when they get into a heart, do as much mischief as nobody in a house, and, in the same way too, all in the smashing and breaking line, and turning everything topsy-turvy. But if the question is not indiscreet, may I ask who the young lady is ?”

“She—that—it—is not a young lady, Sir,” stammered the clerk.

“Then what the deuce is it—not an old one I hope ?”

“Oh! no, Sir—ne—no—its—its—she’s—”

“All my fancy painted her,” *sang* Mr. Phippen, waving his right hand in a theatrical manner, and finally placing it on his heart—“a touch of Alice Grey, eh ?”

“No, Sir, not grey, only—only—a widow’s cap, Sir,” said Mr. Levens, with a sort of courage screwed to the sticking point desperation, and biting his lips cruelly, as his eyes wandered from one extreme angle of the floor to the other.

“Oh! *only* a widow’s cap; well, that is both modest and economical; as I suppose, the ‘doing up’ of them, as Sârah Nash calls it, is not more than six-pence a week; whereas, had there been a widow in it, *that*, by rendering the enterprise considerably more expensive, might have made it

imprudent. And where do you mean to take a band-box for it?"

The grave solemnity with which Mr. Phippen put this question, seemed at length to convey to Janet Chatterton's *fiancé* the incontrovertible fact that he was making a very ridiculous figure; so, taking the initiative in a faint laugh, he for a moment raised his eyes to Mr. Phippen, and replied coherently—

"The fact is, Sir,—if you have no objection,—I—I—wish to marry Mrs. Chatterton?"

"I should think it would be more german to the matter, to ascertain that *she* had no objection, though it is very *prudent*, and *proper*, and *respectful*, and all that, I must say, of you, Tom, to consult *me* first. Very much so; and I'm sure the lady will like you all the better for it, as it proves you are not hurried away by any foolish impetuosity of feeling—a thing women never forgive; more especially widows," said Mr. Phippen, with one of his implacable smiles. "However, if you can get *her* consent, you shall have mine."

"Oh! thank you, Sir, a thousand times; I have *her* consent," exclaimed Mr. Levens, now quite lucidly.

"The deuce you have! then what, pray, becomes of all the honor and respect due to me in consulting me first—eh?"

"First, or last, Sir, my honor and respect for

you, like hers, and like that of all who know you, can only increase every hour of my life."

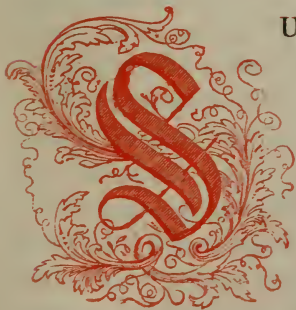
"Ah! Sir," added the young man, as his eyes filled with tears, "it is well that there are not more like you on earth, or no one would want to go to Heaven."

"Fie! fie! Tom; now that you are getting profane, I must go," said Mr. Phippen, rising and putting on his hat; "only mind, don't go and be married down at Brentford, or some out-of-the-way country church, as if you were ashamed of the transaction (as so many people, GOD knows, have reason to be), for I have a great many marriages on hand for next month, and I should like them all to come off together, and after all the marriages are over, you can, as the Welsh parson said when *he* was puzzled by tying so many couples together—*sort yourselves*."

And without waiting for another word, Mr. Phippen slammed to the door after him, and quitted the office.

CHAPTER X.

Being debarred from the Bands in the Parks, those two heathens, Tom Trews and Bob Chatterton, enjoy field-sports on the Sabbath, after a fashion of their own.—Mr. Twitcher re-appears, and though not at Church or on the Treasury-beaches, gives a new illustration of “*non omnes dormio.*”



UNDAY Morning at length came, and a beautiful morning it was, even in the still, sombre, conventicle-looking streets of the city of London; but here, and there, glimpses of the blue sky

were seen athwart the blackened roofs and chimneys of the gloomy houses, and the chime of church-bells swelled along the streets, and both sky, and bells, told of brighter, better, and happier

things than the money-scraping traces the gnomes of commerce had left on all around.

Tom Levens had dressed himself with unusual care ; and, issuing from Threadneedle-street, repaired to a neighbouring church, previous to calling for Bob at Christ's Hospital, as they both were to pass the day at Hazeltree Cottage.

Among the monkish legends, is one, that an angel whipped St. Jerome for endeavouring to imitate Cicero's style ; it is true, that the Abbé Cartaut adds, that it was only because he imitated him so badly. But certain it is, that our more orthodox Protestant divines are safe from flagellation on *either* count ; and so Tom Levens thought, as he rolled out with the rest of the congregation from the city church, where he had been *soporificated* into finishing his morning's nap by the three-quarters of an hour verbal monotony of the preacher. But as he, and young Chatterton, pursued their way across the fields to Brentford, and the pressed grass returned a fragrant incense, the thanksgiving of both, rose in a deep voluntary, upon its perfumed breath to the blue boundless dome of GOD's Eternal temple. Perhaps one reason why Father le Compte and all the Jesuits assert that all men of letters are atheists, (without being far wrong,) is that such men are mere earth-worms, always studying the works of men. Did they even through Nature's horn-book of leaves and flowers, summer

skies, and summer airs, study those of GOD, they might be less "*clever*," but they would assuredly be more wise,—for then innocence, *not* evil, would be their good;—or it may be, that this neglect of the Deity, so often evinced by clever materialism, is but an inverse homage to Omnipotence, and that like the inhabitants of the city of Bartam, they offer their first-fruits, to the evil spirit, and *nothing*, to the great GOD, who they say is good, and stands in no need of these offerings.

Be this as it may, Robert Chatterton and Tom Levens, went on walking, and worshipping; the ritual of the boy being a merry laugh, and the orisons of the young man, a glowing heart, full of happy thoughts; till at length the former, after a rather arduous climb over a sweet-briar hedge, exclaimed, taking off his blue soup-plate, and passing his handkerchief over his face and forehead—

"Well, thank goodness I'm not a girl for life!"

"What do you mean Bob?" laughed his companion.

"Why, look at these petticoats!" said he, holding up his heavy blue woollen garments, "they are so heavy, they catch in everything, and are as hot as a furnace besides."

"We shall soon get into the Hammersmith-road, and then we'll get into an omnibus."

And accordingly, in ten minutes more, they found themselves in that road, and hailed an

omnibus that was rattling down from Kensington. Fortunately, it had but one inside-passenger, as the others preferred broiling on the roof. But that one was a distinguished one, being no less a personage than Newton Twitcher, Esq., M.P., for Muddle-cum-Fudge, who was *en route* to Chiswick, to pass the day with a rich maiden aunt, from whom he had expectations; for when does young England ever pass days, or even sacrifice minutes to maiden aunts *without expectations*? Mr. Twitcher's first move in finding himself in the promiscuous locality of a public conveyance, was always to twirl the capillary phantoms that *should* have been a moustache; and the next, to lose no time *à propos de* bore, or merely *de bottes*, in letting the natives know that he, Mr. Newton Twitcher, was a segment of the legislative wisdom of Great Britain. So on the present occasion, seeing the two intelligent faces before him, he first twirled Stubble No. One, and next Stubble No. Two, and then, addressing himself particularly to Tom Levens, said—

“What is *your* opinion of the peace? *We* in the House of Commons are much divided, both as to its advantages, and its duration.”

“I cannot say,” replied the other, without being at all awed, by the high honor of speaking to a senator, “that I think much of it; there is everything in this particular peace, to remind one of what Helvetius says, at least I think it is he who says,

that "a slight present good frequently inebriates a nation, till in its blindness it is apt to exclaim against the eminent genius, who in this slight present good, foresees many substantial evils. They imagine, that in branding him as a malcontent virtue punishes vice ; whereas, generally it is only folly laughing at judgment." Moreover, we have plenty of warnings in history, if we would listen to them.

"How do you mean?" said Mr. Twitcher, pricking up his ears, for though, not exactly the Turenne that could in a present young Churchill discover a future great Marlborough, yet, like most of the "clever" (?) rising men of the present day, he *had* an intuitive perception of his own interest ; and seemed to divine that the intelligent-looking face before him *might* be made available for furbishing up speeches, perpetuating "Man in Paradise," or pushing him "in Parliament."

"How do you mean?"

"You know, when Cato, the censor, whose sense exceeded his sagacity, joined the senate in determining to destroy Carthage, why did Scipio alone oppose the ruin of that city? But because he considered Carthage both as a rival worthy of Rome, and a dyke for opposing the torrent of vice and corruption breaking into Italy ; and from the prescience taught by his knowledge of history, he

predicted all the misfortunes that would befall Rome at the very moment when she erected her throne on the ruin of all the monarchies of the universe. He, in every country, saw a Sylla and a Marius, while the Romans could only perceive triumphal palms, and hear the shouts of victory ! If the senate slighted Scipio's advice, it was because that then, as now, very few, by knowledge of the past, and *present*, see into the future. Again, at Marathon, Themistocles was the only man of all the Greeks who foresaw the fight of Salamine, and who, by exercising the Athenians in maritime affairs, prepared them for victory, instead of surprise and defeat. Unfortunately we have now no Themistocles, or if we have, he will not be listened to, 'charm he never so wisely,' as long as the jingling of a copper farthing, or a brass button, can echo from the Exchequer to the Legislature to drown his voice. It has been said, and truly said too, that 'civil wars are a misfortune to which we frequently owe great men;' but it would seem, that to great wealth in a state, and to the knowledge of all the arts by which that wealth may be increased, we frequently owe little men, and a vast number of them ; but this, I suppose, only confirms the doctrine of Epicurus, that the world is made of atoms."

"Oh ! do you think so?" said Mr. Twitcher, as if he thought himself an epitome of the best refu-

tation of that assertion. "I think we have some very great men among us."

"Indeed! pray name them?"

Mr. Twitcher hummed and hawed, and thus brought to the test, did not appear to like to risk his veracity, or hazard his judgment, by naming one, and then added, for he always got his opinions ready-made from the newspapers, "Oh! ah! certainly we make great mistakes in legislation sometimes."

"So great, even in the mechanical part of it, that one occasionally wishes to see Caligula's remedy adopted."

"I forget what that was," said Mr. Twitcher, which was a modest way he had of stating the case when he did not know a thing.

"Why he ordered Vespasian's robe to be dragged through the mire, for his neglecting to see that the streets were cleaned."

"You are severe," squeaked Mr. Twitcher, with a little wiry spasmodic laugh.

"No, but Caligula was; and even *he* was *sometimes* right."

"Well I do think," rejoined the sapient M.P. for Muddle-cum-Fudge, "that we *are* wrong to be so very thick with France; for I have no doubt Louis Napoleon will play us some slippery trick yet."

"The geographical position of France and

England must compel them to coalesce, and the only wonder is, that the necessity has not come sooner. And I must say, if there ever *is* any very broad moral or social improvement in England, we shall import them, like our wines and our wit, from France; and, moreover, be indebted for a little additional wisdom to the sound head and telescopic mind that now rules the destinies of that great country, which never will let itself be ruled by a fool."

"So you are a great admirer of the present Emperor?"

"Very great; for I think nothing can be more applicable to him, than the four last lines of the old contemporary epigram, made on Oliver Cromwell—

* * * * * *

* * * * *

‘ Par quel destin faut-il, par quelle étrange loi;
Qu’ a tous ceux qui sont nés, pour porter la couronne
Ce soit l’usurpateur qui donne
L’exemple des vertus, qui doit avoir un roi!’”

"You speak French very well," squeaked Mr. Twitcher. "I myself am an *immense* linguist; French, I almost speak better than English," and here Mr. Twitcher dragged in two or three sentences of French, which, having none of the usual obliging, good breeding of their nation, refused to corroborate what they had been summoned to attest; and,

seeing that they were received only with a look of wonder, unflanked by admiration, he added, abruptly, what he thought would be at once a probe and a compliment,—“May I ask if you are in parliament?”

“Oh, dear, no;” smiled Tom Levens, caressing his right whisker, (for Mr. Phippen had hinted to him a wish that he would shave off his moustaches, and any wound that he might have felt after so great a sacrifice, had long been more than healed, by hearing Mrs. Chatterton one day observe upon her son Robert’s sighing for them on his eleventh birth-day, that she detested them), “oh, dear, no! I was going to say, that I was not of a rank of life to be in parliament, but that does not hold good now-a-days; but at all events, I am neither sufficiently rich, nor sufficiently elastic about the conscience, to be in parliament.”

Mr. Twitcher slightly knit his brows at this allusion to conscience, as if he thought mentioning such a thing to ears parliamentary, was almost as bad as mentioning a certain place to “ears polite;” but as he had so far caught the tone of the house, as to make his displeasure always subservient to his interest, he merely said—

“Perhaps, without being in parliament, you might like parliamentary employment? If so, I shall be very happy to procure you an engagement as amanneusis—or—or—private secretary to an M.P.”

“You are very good, Sir ; but I have a permanent engagement with a most excellent gentleman, whom I would rather serve for nothing, than any other for the highest emolument.”

“Oh ! indeed ! is he in parliament ?”

“No, Sir ; I wish he were, for even half-a-dozen such good, honest and uncompromising men might act as a sort of moral chloride of lime, to counteract the deleterious effects of that legislative malaria.”

Mr. Twitcher had not been ten months in parliament, without having learnt that in England, WORDS are *sensé*, to achieve, constitute, and to establish all things—from recompensing the bravest, and worst cared-for, army in the world—to negating the most damning proofs, or varnishing the most flagrant vices ; and so he did not doubt, but, properly administered, with a due quantity of honey, they could not fail to gain over to his interests and mould to his purposes, a man who had confessed to being on the very lowest step of the social ladder, by saying that he was not of a rank in life to be in parliament ; and therefore it was, that Mr. Twitcher, affecting to cast a look of mingled wonder and admiration at his *vis-à-vis*, said, in his blindest squeak—waving the question as to the amount of purification, that a few honest men might produce on the atmosphere of St. Stephen’s—

"You surprise me when you say that you are not in a sphere of life to be in parliament, for you appear to me to have quite sufficient talents to be so."

"*That* I do not in the least doubt, Sir," smiled Tom Levens, with a look of self-appreciation that must have been dropped by Mr. Jericho Jabber some night in the House of Commons, when he was busy selling his constituents and eating oranges, and probably picked up by Levens, while he was a reporter.

"That I do not in the least doubt, Sir," said the latter, "from all I saw and heard during the time I was a reporter; but although I have had a good education, too good, some persons might think for a man of my class, though I of course do not think so; yet my father is only a publican, a calling that I chiefly regret, because it brings him, and also brought his son into the vortex of sinners."

"A publican!" responded Mr. Twitcher, his hopes suddenly rising like the price of beer after the Sunday Beer Bill,—“then a—a—a—really I almost feel inclined to use force—a—to—a—rescue your talents from so uncongenial a sphere—a—if—a—it were a—only on the principle of *men*, not *measures*,” twittered Mr. Twitcher, launching the first small rickety jest he had ever been *paterfamilias* to, the wit (?) of it consisting in a parliamentary train of thought; the “men” being an

allusion to the man he was angling for; and the "measures" to the divers sized pewter flagons, which Mr. Levens, senior, used in his public-spirited calling.

"You are very good, Sir, but they *are* rescued, and more than rescued; for, with my present worthy and excellent employer, I am far happier than I could have deserved, or expected to be, or than I can ever hope to be again."

"But I think I could open a career to you—a—where fame and wealth might be obtained; and no man is fool enough to reject the one, or philosopher enough to despise the other," said Mr. Twitcher, with a look of owl-like profundity, that seemed to say *there*, there's a nut that you will not easily get the kernel out of, and fling me back the shell.

But his companion only smiled, and said—"As for fame, like happiness, she finds out those she wants, and flies those often, by whom she is most run after; but with regard to philosophy, I only pretend to as much of it, as verifies Seneca's assertion, "*præstat opes sapientia, quas cuicunque, fecit supervænas dedit.*"

Mr. Twitcher's experience and diplomacy were both at fault, for neither from "Man in Paradise" nor "Man in Parliament" could he recall any precedent for man, the species, being impervious to the allurements of forbidden fruit, and still less, for man, the genus tapster, quoting Seneca and

eschewing sinecures ; therefore, upon the whole, perhaps it was more a *tir-d'embarras* than a disappointment, to the member for Muddle-cum-Fudge. When at this juncture, the omnibus stopped at the lane which turns down to Chiswick, and Mr. Twitcher alighted to pursue his way on foot, to Virgin Thorn Lodge, the residence of his respected aunt, Miss Lucinda Twitcher, merely uttering a curt "Good morning" as he passed Tom Levens and young Chatterton.

"Oh! Mr. Levens *do* let us get out here and walk the rest of the way," said the boy, "it's so hot, and that funny looking gentleman, who has just got out, has set my whole face twitching as his does ; and what a funny voice he had, it was like the trumpet the man blows for Punch."

"For shame, Bob! you should speak more respectfully of a British Senator, for he said *we* in the House of Commons."

"*That* man in Parliament!" said the astonished and unsophisticated Bob.

"So he said."

"But he couldn't speak! I'm sure it would be quite ridiculous. We fellows at Christ's Hospital could do better than he could, I'm sure."

"Ah! my dear Bob, many men in Parliament who can't speak, and are equally, if not more, ridiculous, contrive to take up the time of the House, and waste the patience of the public, by

talking for several hours together, because, having crammed and concocted a speech, they *must* let it explode in that particular *locale*."

"Let me pass, *please*," panted a stout gentleman in black, with diamond shirt-studs, and a dark brown wig, parched and arid, like a capillary desert, without a single oily oasis throughout it, and who had just been "*assisted*" from the roof of the omnibus when it stopped to disgorge Mr. Twitcher. This *lasce passare* of his was addressed to Tom Levens, who had one foot out on the step of the vehicle, while the rest of his person remained still seated within, as he concluded his reply to Robert Chatterton.

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said he, acceding to the request by instantly springing out into the dusty road, where, the next moment, he was followed by Bob; and the door of the omnibus, being slammed to, with the obligato "all right," it again rattled on, but had no sooner done so than young Chatterton espied an open letter, lying in the dust beside the causeway, and, picking it up, read the direction—

"To Daniel Hebblethwaite, Esq.,

"Hummums,

"Covent Garden."

"I wonder," said he, "if anybody from the top of the omnibus dropped this?"

"Yeez," said a loutish-looking individual, in a

clean smock-frock ; which, from both his hands being plunged into the pockets of a pair of brown corduroys, caused the said smock to fall in drapery on either side, though rather too scanty to be graceful ; while a white wide-awake, and a red neck handkerchief adorned his upper-man ; a straw, that he twirled between his teeth, doing duty for a *tibia*, as he leant his broad shoulders against the sun-steeped bricks of a garden-wall.

“Yeez—oi—seed he drop from that ’ere stout gent’s pocket ; he as got into the ’bus off the thatch.”

“Then why on earth did you not pick it up and give it to him ; or, at least, tell him he had dropped it ?” said Levens, angrily.

“Ha ! ha ! ha ! that’s a good ’un ; I bain’t a *poast*-man, to *luke* arter other folk’s letters.”

“A specimen of free-born British independence and national amiability,” shrugged Levens. “Here Bob, run with it, and try and stop the omnibus.” And Bob set off as fast as he could run, crying at the top of his voice, “Stop ! Stop ! Stop !” and brandishing the letter above his head, as a sort of signal, while the clown set up a horse-laugh, shewing all his teeth, diving down almost to the ground in his hilarity, and slapping his right thigh till the blows resounded, as he vociferated—

“Danged if that bain’t *proime* ! A *poast*-man in

petticoats! we shall have the postesses in breeches next, I suppose."

But, after a long and ineffectual chase, Chatterton returned, panting, and breathless. "No use," said he, "I could neither make them see nor hear, as the people outside had their backs turned to me."

As Levens took the letter which the boy held out to him, he thought he recognized the handwriting on the direction; and, after considering for a second or two, whose the writing resembled, he recollected that it was that of Sir 'Titaniferous Thompson. It was a large vulgar-looking letter, on blueish Foreign post-paper, not in an envelope, but folded down at each side, as old-fashioned letters used to be; but as the address was in full—

"To Daniel Hebblethwaite, Esq.,

"Hummums,

"Covent Garden,"

Tom Levens, as they walked slowly on, was about to re-fold it in its original folds, determined to inclose it with a line, saying how he had found it, as soon as he reached Hazeltree Cottage, and put it in the post immediately; but in doing so, a strip of paper dropped from it.

"Hallo!" cried Bob, putting his foot on it, to prevent its blowing away; for although there was not much air, the strip was so narrow, and the

paper so thin, that it had not sufficient specific gravity to keep itself on the ground.

“Hallo! I never saw such a rickety concern as that letter; it keeps shedding its leaves in all directions, like an over-blown peony. What’s this? ‘*Pass-words* Golden Pippin’s, for Monday; Cremorne, Tuesday; Waterloo blue, Wednesday; Up the chimney, Thursday; Mind the bear, Friday; Don’t mind the bull, Saturday; Bishop the band, Sunday.’ Goodness! I declare here’s something about you, Mr. Levens, said Chatterton,” pausing in the perusal of this itinery.

“Come, come, Bob, give me that paper,” said Levens; “you should never read what is not addressed to, and therefore does not belong to, you.”

But all in uttering this very proper advice to his young companion, as he replaced the slip of paper in the letter, and transferred the latter to his pocket, the words “Golden Pippins,” “Cremorne,” followed by his own name at the end, and coupled with Sir Titaniferous Thompson’s writing, had jarred disagreeably on his ears, by awaking, or rather confirming, his former suspicions respecting Mr. Sedgemore and his associates; and he resolved at least to elucidate the matter, as far as reading that ambiguous strip of paper went, as soon as he could do so, without setting the boy at his side a bad example. But Bob, neither knowing nor

caring about all this, now began to give himself up wholly to his anticipations of HOME, and the dissolving views his imagination was conjuring up, wondering if his mother would be at the gate to meet them; if his grandmother would be well enough to dine with them; if Sarah would have on *the* cap that he had bought for her with his own money, and his own taste! in St. Paul's Church-Yard, where the cakes are more tempting even than the caps, and the toys of guns, cannons, fortresses, games of race-courses, and railways, with their *aërial pendants*, fire-balloons, more tempting than either; if Tim would come running out with that little fat, fast trot of his, which, but for the length of his tail and the loudness of his me—ew, would have made him look like a little mule; if the bees looked more comfortable, with their hives under wooden roofs; if there were any cherries ripe yet, and if there would be *plenty* of peas for dinner, with a thousand other “ifs,” which formed the bright prismatic hues of Bob's vivid, but impalpable *tableaux*. Generally, as far as the *first* of young Chatterton's ifs went, Mr. Levens' conjectural visions were in perfect unison with them; but on the present occasion, for a wonder, he was thinking more of his master than of his mistress; and it was not till they had turned down Hazeltree-lane, and that the former gave a bound on before, exclaiming—“I declare the very air is

sweeter here !” that he came back into his former self-sufficiently to think so too, as a balmy breath out of the woodbine hedge at that moment, gently stirred his cheek, and seemed as if it had come direct from Hazletree Cottage, which much confirmed his opinion of its superior sweetness.

“There she is !” cried Robert, some ten minutes after ; and on he ran, at the top of his speed, and was soon with his arms round his mother’s neck, who was, as he *knew* she would be, standing at the garden-gate, looking out for them, while Mr. Levens, no doubt not approving of that sort of public *embrassades*, took off his hat in the most respectful manner, and rather slackened, than accelerated his pace, as he approached the haven of his hopes. Was it a sort of moral dropping anchor, or was it that he missed the Pharos by which he had so long steered ? the widow’s cap ! Very likely the latter ; for certain it is, that it was not there ; but in its stead was a little simple, but very becoming cap,—becoming from its very simplicity,—with a few knots of white ribbon, love-ribbon it is true ; so that to borrow (with a slight variation) a quip of poor Hood’s, it did either “for the dear departed,” or “the dear alive.”

“Good morning, Mr. Levens,” said the widow, holding out her hand, and blushing as she did so, as a pleasing relief to the dead white of the cap ; “I hope you have not walked all the way in this

terrible heat? which is more like August than June."

"Oh, no! We got into an omnibus at Hammersmith, and only got out at Chiswick; but the country is so delightful, especially just about here; for Robert and I agreed that the air was sweeter in this green lane than anywhere." And Mr. Levens accompanied this speech with a look full into the eyes of Robert's mother, that seemed to think it could not do better than follow the example of the air.

"How is grandmother?" asked the boy, not apparently noticing Mr. Levens' aërial plagiarisms.

"Indeed, dear, I am sorry to say she is not so well to-day. She has had a bad night," said his mother, as they all three entered the little glass-doored, wainscoted parlour, where the cloth was already laid, and which, warm as it was without, was cool and pleasant, from its bowery tracery of shadowing vine-leaves, on either side.

"May I go up and see her?"

And although Mrs. Chatterton lost no great time in giving an affirmative reply to this request, still, so great was Mr. Levens' *empressement* to oblige his young friend, that before she could literally do so, he was on the point of granting him immediate permission, and had got so far as "Oh, yes!" in the programme, till he suddenly recollected that this taking parental precedence of

his mother was rather premature, so he terminated the "Oh, yes!" with "this room is delightfully cool;" and still further to cover his retreat, upon espying through the glass-door of one of the china-closets, three china baskets filled with cherries, strawberries, and gooseberries, he called Robert's attention to them, by saying—

"Look here, Bob! Here's a splendidly satisfactory answer to your doubt, as to whether the cherries were ripe."

Oh! mother, you are the best little woman in all the world, though not so little neither," cried he, again hugging her; but Robert Chatterton, though indisputably fond of fruit, and, if we must own it, though now eleven, still much addicted to ginger-bread, and all the small vices of confectionary, such as comfits and barley-sugar, was yet a boy of strong principles for his age; and so, without even venturing another look at the china-closet, he darted into the passage on his way to the old lady's room, thus giving a practical evidence that his motto was Grandmothers before Gooseberries. But such was his precipitation, that he nearly knocked Sarah over, who was going into the room with a plate of sliced cucumber, followed by Tim mewing clamorously, who, from being led by the nose (as so many elderly gentlemen are, who live entirely under petticoat-government) from its perfume,

had mistaken the cucumber for smelts *au naturel*, which is the way feline gastronomes prefer them.

"I beg your pardon, Sarah," said Robert, catching her by both arms, in order to restore her equilibrium.

"Dear heart ! Master Robert, is that you ? I'm so glad to see you. You're looking uncommon well, to be sure ; and I declare if you ain't grow'd agin, even since you was here last. And how is Mr. Phippen ? and when is he coming down agin, for I do so long to see him ? You don't *know* how I miss them dear old creaking boots of his, for all I've got your ma, and grandma, and Tim, and the clock, and the fruit, and the flowers, and the bees, and the birds,—in short, more company and comfort than ever I had in my life before. Yet them dear old boots ! was the first sounds as ever seemed to say a kind thing to me ; and goodness knows it was no fancy, for look at all they have done for me and for every one, and the place don't seem nat'ral without them ; and that's the truth of it."

And here, Sarah wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron, which gave Bob time to reply, in the most satisfactory manner, to her queries touching Mr. Phippen's health, and approaching advent, and also an opportunity of seizing Tim, who, while his head was being kissed and his ears pulled, had the power of ascertaining, that what he had pursued

as a fish, when overtaken proved to be nothing but a cold, crude vegetable. Alas! poor Tim! thou art not the only one, whose brightest dreams, and most glowing calculations, end in cold cucumbers, submerged in the vinegar of some sharp reality!

“Oh! thank you, Master Robert, for my new cap. You see I have got it on,” said Sarah, stooping her head to show all its beauties, as soon as her mind had been set at rest about Mr. Phippen.

“But, Sarah, you’ve taken out the flowers, and I thought them the prettiest part of it.”

“Thank you all the same, Master Robert; but it’s not for the likes of me to wear artificials. Lor! a maid of all work looks like a Jack-in-the-Green with such finery; but I’ve made the beautifullest bow-pots as ever you see with them, and I keeps ’em on the kitchen-dresser, and they looks as nat’ral as can be; as you may believe, when I tell you as they *hactually* took in a butterfly the other day, who flew in and lighted on ’em, and the poor thing fidgetted about, disappointed like, as if it could not make out why it could get no dinner off of ’em. But I must take in this here *cookcumber*. I’ve made you a famous large gooseberry pie, and a cake, and some cherry-tarts to take back to school with you, Master Robert,” concluded she, as she opened the parlour door; and Robert, four steps at a time, cleared the flight of stairs *en route* to his grandmother’s room.

Mr. Levens was a great favorite of Sarah's, as all gentlemen under his peculiar circumstances are sure to be, who, in wooing the mistress, do *not* neglect the maid; so, disposing of the cucumber, she hoped he was not tired after his walk; and he complimented her on the becomingness of her cap, and also upon her domestic arrangements, so that, in her own mind, Sarah decided that *he* was the *nicest young man "as ever she see,"* for still the *beau idéal* of that sex remained, in *her* opinion, surmounted by a bay wig, and terminated in Hessian boots; and such a superstitious reverence, indeed, did she attach to the latter, that she had purchased, from an itinerant vendor of objects of village *vértu*, such as yellow plaster of Paris parrots, and red and white pipe-clay cats, a beautiful pair of red china Hessians, with purple tassels, for holding matches, which always figured on the kitchen chimney-piece as her *Lares* and *Penates*. But this love of the beautiful did not prevent Sarah from having, like Mr. Twitcher, a *practical* phase in her character; and though she very sensibly thought much more of potatoes than of politics; and, therefore, troubled herself very little about the right man in the right place, she had a great notion of the right woman in the right place; as the brilliant cleanliness, comfort, order, and neatness of the little cottage evinced. And as she did not doubt that her

mistress was quite capable of entertaining Mr. Levens "unassisted" by anybody, the natural sequence was, that her own proper place was in the kitchen; and so, after having exchanged compliments with Mr. Levens, thither she returned, to see that the couple of very fine fat ducks that were roasting at the fire did not burn.

"Oh! I have had *such* a kind letter from dear good Mr. Phippen—giving his full consent to our marriage," blushed Janet Chatterton, when Sarah had left the room; "but he has taken a house in Upper Brook Street, and he is good enough to wish us to be married from there."

"But, *when*?" inquired Mr. Levens, with a Threadneedle Street attention to chronological detail, which, no doubt, his habits of business had given him; nevertheless, he seemed to have a natural genius for negotiating other transactions—not acquired either in Threadneedle Street, or on the Stock Exchange—for as he spoke, he approached his chair still nearer to the widow's, and, passing his arm round her waist, took one of her hands in his, and looked so earnestly into her eyes, that she was obliged to answer him, which she accordingly did, by saying, with a still deeper blush—

"Next month—the 15th of July."

Was that quiet, steady, impassable-looking clerk of Mr. Phippen's, struck with sudden madness? that he should so seize that poor frail little woman

beside him, and press her to his heart with such vehemence ! that to a looker-on—had any such been there—her suffocation must have appeared his sole aim, and her inevitable end. No, he was not mad ; it was only the “ odoriferous earth,” mingling as it ever does—sooner or later—with our common clay—the poetry of nature triumphing over its prose.

“I was one day in the bath,” says Saadi, in his *Gulistan*, or *Empire of Roses*; “an odoriferous earth—an animated hand passed into mine. I asked, art thou musk ? art thou amber ? It replied, I am but common earth, but I have had some connexion with the rose—its beneficent virtue has penetrated me ; without that, I should still be only common earth.”

And so it was with Janet Chatterton and her companion ; neither were, in the abstract, handsome, though early sorrow had touched, with its hallowing grace, the features of both. But now ! now ! what a change seemed to have come over them. For they actually glowed, and kindled, into positive beauty ; it was, that love was holding his feast of roses in their hearts, and their common clay, so touched, now breathed forth its musk and amber, as a divine incense for his altar.

But Time is no respecter of happiness. The happiest day, like the most miserable, comes to an end, and exactly at the same moment, neither a

second sooner, nor later ; the only difference being, that the happy day *seems* to pass away more quickly, though, as a compensation, it graves more archives on the memory ; for in misery there is ever a monotony which leaves no record but one long “aching void.” So at length the happy day at Hazeltree Cottage came to an end ; for Tom Levens could not delay any longer the communicating his engagement to Mrs. Chatterton, to his parents, and asking their consent, which he did in the usual way, after having dispensed with it ; but he determined to leave Bob as a hostage, to give him an excuse for returning to say “good night ;” two words, which all lovers appear to think are not valid, unless repeated a thousand times. And the declining sun, and lengthening shadows, having warned him that he *must* get to his father’s before dark, he set out for the “Four Alls,” but had no sooner got to the end of the lane, than, looking around him, and seeing that there was no one in sight either way, he took from his pocket the letter directed “to Daniel Hebblethwaite,” first reading the paper of “pass-words,” beginning with “Golden Pippins” and “Cremorne,” and ending with this sentence, “according to the day that that fellow Levens can be got out of the way.”

“Oh, indeed !” said he, first turning the paper in all directions, and then, preparing to read the letter, he added, “I think I am justified in inquir-

ing a little more into this matter, and seeing for what purpose I am to be got out of the way." The letter ran as follows—

“ Friday, June 12th, 1856.

“ Dear H——,

“ It was unfortunate that I should not have been at home, when you called this morning, and that I cannot go over to you to-night, nor to-morrow; as Lady G—— is taking me to the Duchess of ——’s breakfast at ——, and for the *next week*, you know it is advisable that *I* should be as much *out of London* as possible; still, it is curiously unlucky that I cannot *see* you, as I hate trusting things of importance, between you, and I, and the *post*. However, I have a piece of news so good, that I must not delay communicating it to you. Crapes and pliers will *not* be wanted, for by the luckiest accident in the world the old Golden Pippin left his key, *the* key, with his watch, on a chest of drawers last Monday, and Sedgemore took the impression in wax, and we have had a duplicate key made, so now we can do the job *quietly*, and at an *ordinary* hour, which will baffle all suspicion or research. The only *contretems* that can *now* possibly occur, will be that fellow Levens, with his gratitude and fidelity to his employer, and those sort of barricades being got out of the way; for whenever one wants to get rid of people they

are sure to be as immoveable as the monument ; but I inclose you a list of pass-words, which will provide for that contingency. Sedgemore is to offer his fellow-clerk a holiday. As I do not wish the attempt to be made *before Monday* next, the 15th, on which *day and night* I shall be at Wimbledon, at Lord ——'s, Smith, and Jones will call on Sedgemore *every day next week* ; *if* Levens has consented to go out on Monday, Sedgemore will, in conversation with them, use the words "Golden Pippins;" if it is to be on Tuesday, he will bring in "Cremorne," and so on, throughout the week, as I inclose you the list ; but whatever day it is to be, *they* will inclose you *the word* by *post*, that you may be *there*, to bring me *the* deeds, coupons, and whatever *Golden Pippins* may be with them. You must keep Sedgemore in play, with dinners at the White Hart, and other junkettings. *He* is a cheap rogue, easily springed with gentility, and its antipode, gin. Would that Smith and Jones' pretensions were as easily satisfied ; however, we need not trouble ourselves about *them*, when once you, and I, have the needful, and The "Go-a-Head" has her steam up. As the Yankees, like all democrats in theory, are practically, very fond of lords, I have taken our passage, as Lord Irkmanchester (which, as you are aware, is the name of my *hereditary* landed property, while I have bestowed on you a *life* peerage only, as Lord Chiprassee, which I have no doubt

will be as good a name to curry favor with in Broadway, as it is to flavor curry with, in India.

“Ever yours,

“T. T.”

“P. S. Let Sedgemore have (of course as a great favor) six more shares in the Grand Dutchey of Swillandsmokem Lead Mines; it is the *least* we can do for him. It costs us nothing —— and will bring him the same! and the *experience* will be worth much, to a fellow of his shrewd, sharp *unprejudiced* turn of mind.”

“Here’s a precious hornet’s nest of rascality that I have lighted upon, but, thank Heaven, I have done so,” said Tom Levens, putting this charming epistle safely back into the side-pocket of his coat. “You shall not be *disappointed*, or kept in suspense by my not going out to-morrow night, or, at least, *pretending* to so, you patent villains!” added he, clenching his hand, and shaking it at the hazel-hedge, as if the whole gang had been concealed in it. And forthwith, his plans were taken. He resolved, in the first instance, to return and sleep at Threadneedle-street that night, although it was not his turn to do so, and say nothing to Mr. Phippen or anybody, but the next day—the memorable Monday—to affect to accept Mr. Sedgemore’s obliging offer of a holiday, with alacrity, while, in reality, he resolved that very night to get three extra policemen besides Dutton,

who should lie perdue about different parts of the office till the following evening ; so as, at the proper juncture, to “assist” Mr. Sedgemore in entertaining his friends at his private theatricals of “The Iron Chest.” Thus resolved, he now quickened his pace towards his father’s house, silently thanking GOD for having sent him so signal a Providence, through the medium of what men erroneously call “chance.”

“Truly,” thought the young man, as he came out opposite his father’s house, still musing on the writer of the infamous letter he had just read, whom all men, from the greatest to the meanest, in the land, were bowing down to, and worshipping as the golden god of modern idolatry. “*Omne in præcipiti vitium stetit* ;* and as the Psalmist says, ‘Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?’” And he sighed, as he contrasted Sir Titaniferous Thompson and Phillip Phippen—the incarnations of the use, and the abuse, of wealth ; and sighed more deeply still, as he thought of the universal Mammon-worship of this age and country. And yet, even Mammon-worship has *one* ground of defence ; for, because gold *might* procure all that is good, people confound the type, with the virtues typified, and so worship riches as if they were in *themselves* good. “That there have been so many false gods

* All vice stands upon a precipice.

devised," says Tillotson, "is rather an argument that there *is a true one* than that there is none. There would be no *counterfeits* but for the sake of something that is *real*. For though all pretenders *seem* to be what they *really* are not, yet still they pretend to be something that *really is*; for to counterfeit, is to put on the likeness and appearances of some real excellency. There would be no *brass money*, if there were not good and lawful money. *Bristol stones* would not pretend to be diamonds, if there never had been any diamonds. Those idols in Henry the Seventh's time (as Sir Francis Bacon calls them), *Lambert Simnell* and *Perkin Warbeck*, had never been set up, if there had not once been a real Plantagenet, and Duke of York. So the idols of the heathens, though they be set up to affront GOD, yet rather prove that there *is* one, than the contrary."

Let us then hope, that as hypocrisy has been designated the homage which vice pays to virtue, that the virtue still exists, but let us still further hope, that, "that blest Canaan *will* come at last," when virtue will cease to receive, or, at all events, to *accept* such homage.

"Lawr, Tom ! how you frightened me," said little fat Mrs. Levens, as she sat reading her Bible in the bar, like a tun, continued one of the goodly row of bright yellow ones, that figured there, save that *her* buff dress was surmounted by a very smart

cap, with *vapeur*, or flame-colored ribbon, in compliment to the incendiary five pounds Mr. Phippen had bestowed on her.

"I'm all over of a shake like a jelly," continued Mrs. Levens, returning her son's kiss, though it had come the wrong way, by his having gone to the back of her chair, and put his arms round her neck.

"I'm sorry for that, Mother, for I certainly did not come to frighten you; on the contrary, I came to tell you very good news. But where's my father?"

"He's down by the river-side, smoking his pipe, but I'll send for him. Phœbe! run down to the water-side and tell your master as he's wanted *immejet*, but you needn't say as Mr. Tom is come; for as you took and surprised me, Tom, I don't see why he should not have a surprise too. Now what's the good news?" asked Mrs. Levens, laying down her Bible, smoothing her apron, and putting her hands in her pockets, as if she thought there could be no good news that did not relate to *them*. "Can it be as Mr. Phippen is a-going to take you into partnership?"

"No, but somebody else is. In short, Mother, with your, and my father's consent, I'm going to be married."

"Married! Tom?" almost screamed Mrs. Levens, putting both hands up to her cap as if

she thought, with a daughter-in-law "looming in the future," it was high time to take the ribbons, as well as the reins, into her own hands vigorously; "Married! well, I never! but don't let us talk of such things here, we shall be more to ourselves in No. 3." And accordingly, to No. 3 they adjourned, where Mr. Levens, thinking he had been summoned to a customer, instantly joined them.

"Hallo! Tom, is that you? You're late; why not have come to dinner? what will you take now? some of the Mecklenburg Lodge sherry?—eh? only say the word?"

"Nothing, Sir, thank you, I *have* dined; I only came to see you, and to ask your and my mother's—"

"Lawr! dear, would you believe it," broke in Mrs. Levens, "Tom's a going to *git* married!"

"Married!" echoed Mr. Levens, "married! to how much?"

"Aye, is it a fortin, Tom?" rejoined his mother, "for I'm sure, with the eddication you have had, you've every right to look for one."

"Yes," reiterated Mr. Levens, shaking his head, solemnly, as he seated and threw himself back in an arm-chair, "has she money, Tom? for marriage is a serious thing to them as is not used to it, and often takes a deal to make one bear up under it; for it's a chance if two prizes find their way into

one family, and you mustn't look to getting such a woman as your mother, Tom."

Tom didn't, and therefore looked humbly on the ground.

"Well, tell us who the gal is, Tom? I hope it ain't that 'orrid Sally Spanker, of the Blue Boar, at Brentford; for though old Spanker does mean to give her five thousand pounds to her fortin, I'm sure such a forward hussy as *that* would be dear with ten, though I should hold her very cheap, even if she had twenty!" concluded Mrs. Levens, tossing her head with ineffable disdain.

"No, mother, it's not Miss Spanker, it's a very different person in every respect; it's—it's—a widow," said Tom, faintly, and with as culprit an air as if *he* had made her so.

"A widow!" screamed Mrs. Levens, in a sharp falsetto; "Lawr, Tom, you never could—you never can—"

"A widow! Tom! Tom! Tom!" deprecated Mr. Levens, in a La'Blache-like basso; and then added, while Mrs. Levens was fanning herself with her handkerchief, quite overcome at this astounding intelligence, as she rapidly thought *she* did not want any more *weeds* in *their* bar. "It's a thing, Tom, as your mother has always warned even *me* against; for Thomas, says she to me, when we was only married a year, if so be as I should 'appen to die, promise me as you won't

let nothink second-hand take my place ; and if it is the will of the Almighty, as my dear babby—that was you, Tom—is to 'ave a step-mother, let it be one as is young and hinnocent, Thomas ; but what hever you do, don't you marry a widow ; for if she 'ave 'ad her way with her *fust 'usban*, she've got the knack of it, and will continue the business with *you* ; and hif, hon the *contrairy*, *she* was screwed down, she'll be a fool, indeed, if she don't make you pay off the scores of her *fust* Bluebeard. So what *hever* you do, Thomas Levens, *don't you go for to marry a widow !* And if *I*, with all my *hexperience*, dare not venter on such a hornet's nest concern, to think of *you* rushing into it, Tom, with nothing to protect you but a little Latin and Greek *book larning*, and *such like*, which would'nt be of no more use, under such circumstances, than a clay pipe and a tin sarcepan kiver would agin a tiger."

Mrs. Levens was visibly affected by the suppositious state of affairs, at the imaginary crisis of her own demise, even antedated as that melancholy possibility had been, and she now sobbed out—

"Oh, Tom ! with your manners and *moustachers*, to think of your throwing on yourself away upon a one-and-nine-penny, as I calls them ere widow's caps, for so they may be seen ticketed up hin hevery little trumpery shop winder. I do declare it's no better than marrying a ticket-of-leave."

As soon as poor Tom could obtain a hearing, amid the diatribes of his father and the denunciations of his mother, he defended *his* widow from the serious impeachment of wearing a one-and-nine-penny cap of liberty; but what went much further to establish her respectability and fitness to be his wife, was his informing them that he did not want to bring her to the "Four Alls," as she had a home of her own, £200 a-year, and better than all, was a *protégée*, and great favorite of Mr. Phippen's.

"A home of her own, Tom!" said Mrs. Levens, drying her eyes, and calming her nerves.

"What, Tom!" cried Mr. Levens, "two hundred a year, and a great favorite of Mr. Phippen's," rising suddenly from his chair as if he had been galvanized, and buttoning his coat rapidly, as though he had been about to run a race, or clear a ditch, though the evening was intensely sultry. "Two hundred a year, Tom!" repeated he, now as rapidly *unbuttoning* his coat, and flinging it widely back, so as to show a large portion of his shirt-sleeves. "No doubt all things is hordered for the best: and I don't think as I 'ave hany right, Tom, to place hany *preventions* between you hand your wishes; though widows *is not* what I approve of, has a *gin'ral* rule," added Mr. Levens, holding out his hand with much portly *paterfamilias*-pathos to his son.

"I only 'ope Tom, that she is a prudent *ooman*, as will make your 'ome comfortable, *hand* you shan't 'ave no opposition from me," said Mrs. Levens, with the same amiable self abnegation.

"I think, Mother, that even *you* will own that she is all that any man could hope or wish for in a wife; and that I am indeed fortunate in getting such a one."

"And what's her name, Tom? And where does she live?"

He informed her, and Mrs. Levens said she would go and see her the next day, and make Levens go with her.

"Eh! my dear, eh! what's that you say I must do to-morrow?" asked Mr. Levens, who was now pacing up and down the room with both his hands plunged into his trouser-pockets, turning and jingling his money, and thinking what a famous thing it would be when Tom could do the same.

"Why, Mr. Levens, you are to go with me to Hazeltree Cottage, to see Mrs. Chatterton, Tom's intended, to-morrow."

"Oh, ah! yes, certainly, of course, my dear. But, Tom," said Mr. Levens, suddenly stopping in his perambulations, and making a sort of right-about-face movement towards his son, "no incumbrances I hope? Nothing in the ready-made line, eh?"

"Only one son, of eleven years old, Sir, whom,

about a year and a half ago, Mr. Phippen kindly entered at Christ's Hospital."

"Well, come, *that* don't amount to an incumbrance; a blue coat, don't come under the head of blue ruin," laughed Mr. Levens, much delighted at this professional jest.

But the moon had now lighted in the night, so Tom wished his parents good bye; *he* not a little delighted that the matter was so happily concluded, and *they* quite convinced, that Tom was *even* cleverer than they had always thought him. And so he was, for there is nothing so clever, because so all-conquering, as happiness; and as he re-traced his way to Hazeltree Cottage, to pick up Bob, and announce to Janet, his father and mother's intended visit on the morrow, it would have been difficult to tell which was the most buoyant, his heart, or his step.

CHAPTER XI.

Shewing how amiably Mr. Sedgemore sacrifices himself to give Mr. Levens a holiday; and the ungrateful return Mr. Levens makes for such kindness; which is always what a fellow meets with, when he is Ass enough to do a good-natured thing; and which is doubtless the reason why so few fellows ever do, do, good-natured things. Daniel Webblethwaite, Esq. and his diamond studs, resolve to explore new Worlds, and sparkle in another Hemisphere.



So it may be supposed, Tom Levens was seated at his desk betimes on the following Monday morning; while, like a male Morgiana, he had prepared, not exactly enough boiling oil for the Forty Thieves, but had stowed away the four

policemen, with sufficient provisions, for the day, in order to surprise the three "*gents*" in the evening, as agreeably as the faithful Morgiana had done the turbaned traitors. The office-clock had just struck ten, when Mr. Sedgemore made his appearance; he was not wont to be so punctual, more especially of a Monday morning; but Tom Levens, not to appear to remark upon this unusual diligence, kept his eyes bent upon his ledger, as if too intent upon what he was doing, to brook interruption; so, in reply to Mr. Sedgemore's banter, of—

"Ahem ! punctuallity begets confidence, and is the sure path to leisure and respect. Good morning, Levens."

"Morning," was the curt reply, and again the scratching of the pen was audible, and a silence of a quarter of an hour ensued; at the expiration of which, Levens said aloud, closing the book, putting it away in its place, and taking down another, "thank goodness *that's* done;" and then, as prior to opening the one before him, he began mending a pen, he added, "you were good enough to say the other day, Sedgemore, that you would take my place here, any day this week; now would it be inconvenient for you to do so this afternoon? Because I want to go down to Brentford, if you can make it convenient. I choose Monday, because Mr. Phippen seldom comes here of a Monday, or

if he does, he don't stay, and so there is less to do; however, if to-day is inconvenient to you, I'll put it off to another day."

"All right, I'm your man. That's the time of day," said Mr. Sedgemore; "all I hope is, I shall not fall asleep on my post, for I've been making a night of it; and however game a fellow is, he must sleep sometimes, but I'm glad you have chosen to-day, as to tell you the truth, *I* shall be glad of a quiet evening."

"Well, thank you, I hope you may have one," said Levens, Jesuitically, as he resumed his writing.

"What time do you start?" said Sedgemore, scarcely able to conceal his delight.

"Not before four; I don't think I can finish what I have to do, before that time."

As he was still speaking, Mr. Phippen came into the office, and nodding a "good morning" to each of his clerks, without taking off his hat, seated himself at the table to write a letter, first having handed a cheque to Tom, saying, "here, Levens, just be so good as to go to the bank with this; I want five hundred pounds, half in gold, and half in notes, and make haste back, as I must be at the other end of the town by one."

Levens had written on a piece of paper, "Will you have the goodness, Sir, to be at your hotel, at

between 5 and 6, P.M. to-day, as I have something of importance to communicate to you.

T. L."

This paper he now gave Mr. Phippen in exchange for the cheque, saying out loud, "I believe, Sir, this is the bill of lading you asked me for last Wednesday."

"Yes, that's it," said Mr. Phippen, taking the hint, as he nodded at Levens, with a telegraphic look, and transferred the paper to his waistcoat-pocket.

No sooner had his fellow-clerk departed, than Mr. Sedgemore's assiduity to his own individual duties became extreme, as indeed it always was in Mr. Phippen's presence.

Meanwhile, the latter sat with his hat on, reading the letters that the morning's post had brought, till Levens returned with the money.

"You have counted it, Tom?"

"Yes, Sir, you will find it quite right, £250 in notes, tens and fives ; and £250 in gold."

"Tom, indeed ! and though I have been with him so much longer, the old codger never calls *me* Mun," thought Mr. Sedgemore, as he tried a pen with "S-u-s-a-n-n-a-h," separated but not dis-united, like himself and Miss Simmons, when they were not at *Cre-morne*, or some other place of *gen-teel* resort together.

Mr. Phippen took four of the notes and a hand-

ful of the gold, without counting it, out of the bag, and then locked up the rest in the safe, which Mr. Sedgemore perceived with an inward chuckle, that had great difficulty in not bursting into a loud crow, such as he was in the habit of favoring his friends with, when he suited the word, or at least the voice, to the action, and strutted, cock-of-the-walk, at the Rosherville Gardens or Vauxhall.

"Well, now I'm going," said Mr. Phippen.

"If you have nothing particular for me to do to day, Sir, I should be glad of a holiday this afternoon? and Sedgemore has been good enough to say he will take my place," said Levens.

"By all means," said Mr. Phippen, as he pnt on his gloves, and left the office.

The quicksilver of Mr. Sedgemore's spirits began visibly, or rather audibly to rise, for one after another, the office was made vocal with his choice *repertoire* of comic songs, from "Billy Barlow" down to "The Literary Dustman," while Levens could not help occasionally stealing a glance at a long dark passage which led to Mr. Phippen's dressing-room, at the upper end of the office, and which was, one-half, panes of ground-glass that surmounted the wainscot; for along this passage it was, that the four policemen were lying perdue, as from it *they* could, through some of the little bright stars in the ground-glass, command a perfect view of all that took place in the office;

while, had any one from thence even looked through these panes, they could not have seen into the passage, from which there was another egress which led out into a back street. Just as Mr. Sedgemore was thumping on his desk with a ruler to imitate a hurricane of popular applause, and facetiously vociferating "*an-core*" to his own performance, a stifled sneeze was heard in the passage, but before Mr. Sedgemore had time to note it, Levens began sneezing in the most pertinacious manner, adding at the end of the *roulade*—

"Bless me! what a cold I have," and even while issuing this *bulletin* he gave another sneeze, and then said with a smile—"I suppose, Sedgemore, it is all those airs of yours that have given me cold."

"He! he! he! not bad for a bumpkin," and then Mr. Sedgemore, in the genteelest manner, knocked one of his thumb-nails against the other, which was a jocular method he had of denoting a homœopathic modicum of praise. Here the door opened and Messieurs Jones and Smith made their appearance.

"Your most obedient, *gents*," said Jones, who always acted as spokesman, Smith being more in the silent and seidlitz-powder line, as he was much addicted to headaches and heartburn; and, therefore, had acquired a high reputation for *sense*

among his associates, chiefly on account of his sedentary habits, while Jones (though Jones is a name not *necessarily* synonymous with genius) *was* the genius of *this* clique, as his was the ardent, restless spirit ever o'er leaping present duties for future triumphs; in short, Smith and Jones, or Jones and Smith—for, like poor Colonel Lincoln Stanhope's couplet on "Mistress Camac," it is all the same "whether forward or back"—were the impersonations of Helvetius's assertion, that "indolence is always the predominant quality in a man of sense; he has nothing of that activity of soul, by which a great man in power, forms new springs for moving the world, or sows the seeds of future events; it is only to the man of passion, and him who thirsts after glory, that the book of futurity is open."

"Well, Sedgemore," said Jones, flinging himself into a chair, and elongating his feet, for Jones always *set in* for the whole morning when he came to see Sedgemore, "are you for 'the Princess's to-night?—' Gracious Majesty' to be there, as Barnum would say."

"No, can't to-night," responded Sedgemore, shaking his head with as much official importance as if he, in his own person, had planned every blunder in the Crimean war; "work's the word, besides those *Golden Pippins* yesterday, though

they looked so good, played up old gooseberry with me; by the bye, Smith, do you happen to have a seidlitz powder about you?"

And Smith, without uttering a word, produced from his coat-pocket, the blue and yellow cardboard, and presented it to Mr. Sedgemore open, with the same sort of *en usez-vous* air, if not exactly with the same grace, that an *Œil de Bœuf Freloquet* might have offered his diamond *tabatière* to a brother *Talons rouge*.

"By Jove!" cried Jones, starting to his feet and seizing a pen, "what a head I have."

"Who ever doubted it," said Sedgemore, with a low bow; then thrusting his tongue into the corner of his cheek so as to imitate an attack of the mumps in one of its preliminary stages.

"Give me a sheet of paper, my dear fellow," continued Jones, apparently impervious to the compliment; and forthwith he commenced writing, but so soon was the letter concluded, that either his style was the *beau idéal* of terseness, or else he had possessed himself of that epistolary secret, peculiar to the stage, where long letters of love, or business, are indited with a single scratch of the pen; for of this one the direction was decidedly the longest part; but when it was directed and sealed, Jones announced that it was lucky he had remembered it, and would instanter go and post it.

“Well, as Sedgemore is busy to day,” said Smith, who seldom spoke, but when he did, it was always to the purpose, “I think we had both better go ; but we shall see you again in the course of the week,” added he, replacing the box of seidlitz-powders in his pocket, but not before he had made the generous offer of leaving half its contents for Mr. Sedgemore’s use ; an offer, however, that was gratefully declined, for that gentleman was a great advocate of moderation — as far as seidlitz-powders, and the rest of the *Pharmacopæ* were concerned.

“Bye, bye,” said Jones holding out one finger, winking his right eye, and by, at the same time, scratching the back of his left ear causing his hat to droop to the right *à la Tappageur*.

“Farewell! we shall meet again at Philip’s eye, as the two side-curls of his late Majesty, Louis Philippe’s wig used to say,” rejoined the facetious Mr. Sedgemore ; and as soon as his friends had departed, he recommenced his musical explosions by roaring out, with a sort of cornet *à piston* accompaniment, managed by means of a six-pence—

“ Oh ! have you not heard of a story ?

A wonderful story, and true ;

If you have not, and will but attend,

It’s a hundred to one but you do.

’Tis of a man of some note,

A comical outlandish fellow,

In Venice he lived, as 'tis wrote,
 And his name it was Mr. Othello!
 A gentleman there had a daughter,
 With Othey she grew very mellow,
 He wondered what passion had caught her;
 She sighed for her Blackey, Othello.
 Next, a young Captain—Cassio by luck
 She saw, a gay dashing young fellow,
 But his sword, and his gorget it stuck
 In the gizzard of Mr. Othello.
 For with Desdy he often took coffee sir,
 Till Othey one day very gruff,
 Said, Desdy don't ask that e're officer;
 But Cassio to blind the old muff,
 Affected the jolly and *boisterous*,
 And, in order to seem up to snuff,
 Treated Othey with beer at an oyster-house."

"What desecration!" said Levens, putting both hands to his ears, not able to stand it any longer.

"I never saw such a mar-plot as you are Levens," said the chorister; "for I was *jist* agoing to *git* the *anketcher* ready, and bring in a *werdict* of '*sarve her right*' agin the young *ooman*; and it's too bad you can't let me have a little home-made fun, when I gave up going to the Princess's on your account."

"Oh, well! pray don't let me prevent your going," said the other, carelessly, "any other day will do for me as well."

"Not for the world! 'Most potent, grave, and reverend senior,' (though you *are* my junior) what Mun Sedgemore says; Mun Sedgemore *does*—

touch my honor, touch my life; which means, 'taint *gen-teel* to fish with a knife."

In similar brilliant *jeux d'esprit*, on the part of Mr. Sedgemore, and a profound silence on that of his companion, time rolled on till the office-clock struck four; when Levens rose, took down his hat, and put on his gloves.

"Well, good bye, Sedgemore," said he, "have you ordered your dinner, or shall I do it for you?"

"Thank you, I did order it from next door, as I came this morning, for half past four; but you might just as well tell them, as you go by, not to make a mistake, as they did the other day, but to be *sure* and let me have lobster sauce with the salmon, instead of capers; I don't want any one's capers but my own."

"Very well," said Levens, as he closed the door after him, and left Mr. Sedgemore, not exactly *alone* in his glory.

No sooner had the latter got into the street, and out of sight of Mr. Phippen's office, than he hailed a 'Hansom' with a good stout horse; and jumping into it, told the man he would give him an extra shilling, if he would drive as fast as possible to the Blenheim Hotel. Accordingly, as money proverbially makes the mare go, in an incredibly short space of time the cab-man pulled up at the door of that hotel.

“Mr. Phippen in?” asked Levens, of a waiter standing at the door, as he sprang from the ‘Hansom,’ and tossed the driver his fare.

“He is, Sir, but he’s at dinner,” replied the waiter, expanding his arms and napkin rather in a spread-eagle fashion, so as to impede, as it were, the onward progress of the impetuous visitor.

“What name shall I say, Sir?” still further retarded the waiter.

“Levens;—have the goodness to say that Mr. Levens would be glad to speak to Mr. Phippen for a moment, on particular business.”

“Very good, Sir; and-up stairs the waiter went, by a sort of circular movement, placing his hand on the turn of the banister, and swinging himself up the first flight, without troubling the intermediate stairs, which Tom Levens, however, did not disdain, but ascended in the ordinary way after him.

No sooner had the waiter announced his name, than Mr. Phippen rose from table, with his napkin tucked through one of his button-holes, as was his wont; and coming forward to meet him, said, “Have you dined, Tom?” and to the waiter, “lay another cover.”

“You are very good, but not for me, Sir; I could not eat anything, I shall dine later.”

And this was strictly true; for he felt such a pre-disposition to suffocation, from anxiety and excite-

ment, that had he eaten even a bit of bread, it might have choked him ; however, he gladly took a glass of water.

“I am sorry to interrupt you at dinner, Sir,” said he, as soon as the waiter had withdrawn, “and indeed I had originally intended not to let you know anything about the matter, till it was over, and the scoundrels in custody ; but, upon second thoughts, I decided that it might be more advisable that you yourself should be an eye-witness to what takes place, as you must naturally be the best judge of what ought to be done.”

“Scoundrels ! in custody ! business over ! What, Tom, have they been paying a visit to the iron chest already ? ’Gad ! it is, then, as I suspected.”

“It is, Sir ; but if you will go on with your dinner I will explain the whole affair to you.”

“Good !” said Mr. Phippen, swallowing a glass of sherry ; now go on, Tom.”

And the latter gave him a circumstantial detail of the manner in which Chatterton and he had found Sir Titaniferous Thompson’s letter to Mr. Daniel Hebblethwaite, and then put it into his hand. Great were the variations of Mr. Phippen’s countenance while he perused it, and when he had finished doing so, he held out his hand to Levens and said, in a voice, and with a look of mingled seriousness, exultation, and sorrow—

“You know not, Tom, the service you have

rendered—not only to me, but to scores of others !”

“Thank GOD for it, Sir. Indeed, it is His mercy we must thank for it; for I am nothing but a humble agent in this providential intervention.”

“True, Tom; and the postman is only an agent ignoring even his agency; still, if he brought us some news good, beyond our most sanguine expectations, we should bestow a little of our gratitude on him, and reward him.”

“*You*, would, Sir,” smiled the young man, “but I rather think that most persons in the present skin-flint, save-all times—especially the richer and higher in rank they were—would rather, on that very account, endeavour even to mulct him of his salary or his Christmas box.”

“Well, Tom, now, what is your advice in this business? for there is no time to be lost.”

“That was exactly what I thought, Sir, and therefore I took the liberty of acting at once—even before I consulted you;” and here he detailed the precautionary measures he had taken.

“Capital! nothing can be better! but it’s this Hebblethwaite that we must, above all, get hold of, and compel into an ample confession of his iniquities; for he is evidently the Jonathan Wilde to that Blueskin, or rather blackskin, of a Thompson.”

“Yes, Sir; but as it seems to me by the letter Mr. Jones wrote in such haste this morning, that

it was, of course, the *Golden Pippin* despatch to summon him to the council of war, to be held in your office by this precious conclave to-night, so that he will not *fail* to be there, as his orders are to bring Sir Titaniferous the *deeds*, papers, &c., abstracted from your iron chest; therefore, what I came to suggest, Sir, was, that you should return with me without loss of time; go in the back-way, and join Dutton and the rest of the detectives in the passage, so as to be present when the villains are taken in the fact."

"It's lucky, Tom," smiled Mr. Phippen as he rose and rang the bell, "that you are *only* a clerk in *my* office, for you have too good a head ever to have got on had you been a clerk in any of the Government offices. Be so good," added he, turning to the waiter who now entered, "to bring me my hat and gloves, and send for a 'Hansom' immediately."

"One glass of wine, Tom, to drink to the success of our enterprise."

"I would rather not, thank you. I'll drink to our victory when we've gained it."

"Well, perhaps you are right; cool courage is of no use without a cool head."

"Cab's at the door, Sir," announced the waiter re-appearing.

And Mr. Phippen and Tom Levens lost no time in going down stairs and getting into it. "145,

Oxford-street," said Mr. Phippen to the driver; but they had no sooner got quite clear of the hotel than he pulled the check, and upon the man's getting down, he told him whereabouts in Threadneedle Street to stop, which was, in fact, at the entrance of an alley, leading to the back of his own offices, and, holding up half-a-crown, he added—

"*That*, for yourself, if you don't let the grass grow under the horse's feet, and so set him grazing."

As it was still broad day-light, with a bright setting sun when they arrived in Threadneedle Street, they hurried down the alley in question, and Levens knocking gently with his knuckles on the back-door of the office—the signal he had previously agreed upon with Dutton—the door was immediately opened by the latter, and stealthily, and noiselessly, Mr. Phippen and his clerk entered; for Levens, who had thought of everything, had provided some large list shoes to slip on over all their boots, so that the music of the Hessians, which Sarah Nash admired so much, was now entirely muffled, as their wearer, leaning with his hand on the wrist of his young companion, crept on to the ground-glass window, where the other three policemen were diligently watching the scene that was going on in the office, which was one of rather an uproarious nature; as from Mr. Phippen's large massive office-table the papers had been

entirely cleared, and in their place was a goodly array of glasses and black bottles of every conceivable shape and size, some flat and square, proclaiming themselves of Dutch origin, others squat and rotund, evidently of West Indian parentage. At the head of the table, in Mr. Phippen's large green library-chair, was seated Daniel Hebblethwaite, Esq., with his diamond studs, and also at the head of the table, on Mr. Hebblethwaite's right hand, was seated Mr. Sedgemore, with a large paper star pinned to his left breast, and a piece of blue paper, such as wax-lights are generally enveloped in, cut into a broad strip and going diagonally across his waistcoat, as a sort of ribbon of the Garter for the million, while Smith and Jones were to be found (as they generally are) on either side.

"It was *dooched unfortunate*," said President Hebblethwaite (or, as the rest called him, Lord Chiprassee)—"*dooched unfortunate* my losing that letter. However, no great harm done, since here we are with the key, safe and snug," added he, taking a small key from his waistcoat-pocket, the fac-simile of the one that had formerly belonged to Mr. Phippen's strong box, and holding it gingerly up between his finger and thumb; whereupon, Mr. Sedgemore knocked on the table with his knuckles and cried, "Hear! hear! hear!"—as did Messieurs Smith and Jones—the latter

saying, as he filled his glass with a limpid-looking fluid from a dropsical bottle before him, "Can't you give us a weed, Sedgemore?"

"Hush! not for the world! On no account must the office smell of tobacco; for no one would believe that burglars remained to smoke, with the fear of *being smoked*, before their eyes," cried President Hebblethwaite, putting up both his hands deprecatingly, with the palms turned to the company to let them see how clean they were.

"More especially," said Mr. Smith, who, as we before observed, seldom spoke, but when he did, always to the purpose—"more especially, as we cannot venture to do the job by daylight, for fear of any prying eyes from the street, or postman's knock, or any other interruption. And yet it must be done before nine, when Dutton always comes; and we have all the things to put back on this table and set the place in order, so that it may look like a parallel case to the robbery of Rogers's Bank some time ago, when everything was left intact, and the lock of the iron safe even, untampered with."

"Ditto," flatised the second Daniel, holding up his glass to the light, and screwing one of his very ugly, small, round, black eyes tightly, as he looked at its contents through the other.

"Then *praps*," said Mr. Jones, "in default of cigars your lordship will favor us with a song?"

"You must ask my *vice* for *that*," rejoined the President pointing, with a jerk of his thumb, to Mr. Sedgemore.

"Ha ! ha ! ha !" guffawed Mr. Jones, "Your lordship is modest to speak of your vice, as if you had *but* one."

"*This* Turk he had one only *darter*," quoted Mr. Sedgemore, pointing at, and bowing to Hebblethwaite.

"Come then, Sedgemore, give his lordship a parting stave, since, though you are both bound for the United States, you are going to travel different ways; as he goes with the Copper M.P. to America, in 'The Go-a-Head,' and you, with the fair Simmons, to Spanish Town, to look after that pretty little rum concern of his lordship's there, with the chance of future promotion in the other Indies, if you prove worthy of walking in his lordship's and the baronet's steps."

"Aye ! he's down at Wimbledon, isn't he?—and so won't hear the good news till to-morrow," replied Sedgemore.

"Mum's the word," said Hebblethwaite, putting his finger to the side of his nose; "he's bespoken an indisposition at Lord ——'s, and retired to his room, begging he may not be disturbed till he rings in the morning, which will give him time, by putting the key in his pocket, to run up to town, where he will wait for us at the Hummums, *as* Mr.

Smith, till twelve, and then get back before there is any chance of his being missed."

At this intelligence, Mr. Phippen, who could hear as well as see everything, pressed Levens' arm, who nodded his head, as much as to say "Yes, *that's* well to know."

"By Jove! I've got an idea!" cried Sedgemore, suddenly thumping the table till all the glasses rattled again.

"NO! you can't surely mean *that*, Sedgemore?" said Mr. Jones, backing his chair, putting both his hands upon his knees, poking his head forward nearly into Sedgemore's face, opening his eyes to their fullest extent, and then his mouth, and staring at him in a manner of incredulous astonishment, that caused even Smith to roar; and after the roar had subsided, he added—"Come then, let us hear the infant phenomenon."

"Why, now look here," said Sedgemore, "neither the governor, nor Long-shanks, (here Levens put out his leg and pointed to it with a bow, as much as to say "*that's me*,") know Mr. Hebblethwaite's hand-writing; suppose then he were to take and write upon a piece of paper, this paragraph—

'You can easily put something in Sedgemore's beer at dinner, to give him a few hours' comfortable sleep; and having got leave to go out, Levens, you know *you* will never be suspected of having let us

in, any more than of having taken off the impression of the —. ‘Don’t finish the word, but burn the paper along both ends, and put it in the grate, at the top near the hob, where it can’t fail to be seen, and will look as if the flame had gone out that had been intended to consume it.’ *Now* do you understand my idea?”

“Capital!” cried the other three, while Mr. Phippen was busy doubling, and shaking both his fists at them, behind the ground glass, and muttering “Scoundrels!” till Tom Levens twitched the old gentleman’s voluminous silk handkerchief out of his pocket, and, in great trepidation, placed it before his mouth.

No sooner said, than done. The villainous epistolary fragment was soon indited, artistically burnt along the sides, by a meandering flame with a taper, and placed, as suggested, near the hob.

“As all work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy, now let’s have a song,” cried Jones, rubbing his hands.

“Well, what is it to be?” asked Mr. Sedgemoor, replenishing his glass.

“Oh! anything *hamatory*, or *hanacrehontic*, or, if you like it better, something swampey and sentimental, in Smith’s line—all about ‘*arts*’ betrayed and blighted ‘*opes*.’”

“Out with the *wenomous* hanimals then; get ready your *wipers*, *hand* prepare for hydraulics,”

•

said Mr. Sedgemore, clearing his throat; after which obligato prelude he began twirling his thumbs, turning up his eyes, and, in a most lachrymose manner, intoned with the true nasal convention twang the following charming effusion :

“ I loved a maid, called Betty Wade,
 So tall and perpendicular ;
 Her neck, and waist, did suit my taste,
 In ev-er-y *par-ticular*.
 Her roguish eye, did seem to cry,
 If you would win me, follow, man ;
 So at her feet, I sigh'd, “ Oh sweet !
 Pity Mr Solomon, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Solomon !
 Pity Mr. Solomon ! (Chorus)

A grenadier, as you shall hear,
 Her sweetheart was unknown to me ;
 And the next time I met, my sweet Bet,
 She was as a stone to me.

I bought a fine new valentine,
 Eighteen-pence I paid for it ;
 Some verses new, to *my* love true,
 I *my*-self had made for it.

These verses said, Dear Betty Wade,
 Though *he* is a fiercer, taller man ;
 (Yet beware of deceitful *holler* men.)

A *loveyear* true, I'll prove to you,
 Your faithful, constant Solomon !
 Mr. Solomon ! Mr. Solomon !

Your faithful, constant Solomon ! (Chorus.) ”

“ *Bray-vo, Bray-vo*, Solomon, cried Mr. Jones, after he had vociferated the last note of the chorus.

“I’m sorry, *gents*,” said Hebblethwaite, pulling out his watch “to interrupt the festive scene; but I think it’s time to shut up shop; so roll over the *’amper* will you, Smith, till we cage these here blackbirds, as we must be on the look-out for the nightingale, and goldfinch’s *key* note, and we have this table to put in order first. And, remember, Dutton will be here at nine; and all the doctors tell me a policeman is worse than poison for my complaint; so I would rather be knocking at our *worthy* friend the baronet’s door before that time. So, Smith to the shutters, Jones to the door, Sedgemore and I will do the rest; and here, Smith, are the lucifers; and when you have fastened the shutters, strike a light; and you, Jones, put the large blue bag for the papers and money, on a chair beside the iron safe, all ready.”

As these preparations rapidly progressed, Mr. Phippen’s and Tom Levens’ hearts began to beat almost audibly. At length the hamper was packed, and according to another amendment of Mr. Sedgemore’s, rolled into the sort of roofless sentry-box, in which Levens’ desk was situated. Next, the ink-stand, books, pens, and paper, were all carefully re-placed on the table; and the green morocco library-chair put back in its usual place opposite the archway for the knees, in the centre of the writing-table; and, the light being struck, the Commander-in-Chief, Hebblethwaite, took

from his pocket a dark lantern, and lit the candle within it, from the wax-light that Smith had placed on the table, leaving the latter there, as he said, lest a spark should fall upon the papers; and, taking the counterfeit-key from his waistcoat-pocket, the burly burglar walked as cautiously and noiselessly over to the iron-chest, as if it had really been the dead of the night, and the house full of sleeping inmates, whom he feared to awaken, while Sedgemore preceded him, holding the lantern, and Smith and Jones followed, to hold open the bag that was to receive the plunder.

“I don’t know how much more there may be there,” said Sedgemore, in a small tremulous voice, which his guilty conscience had lowered into a whisper; “but I know old Golden Pippin got £500 from the bank this morning, and took very little out of it.”

Here, a sort of scratching of the key against the iron, in Mr. Hebblethwaite’s pursuit of the lock, about as loud as a rat in the wainscot, might be distinctly heard.

“Hold the lantern nearer, Sedgemore; I can’t find the lock.”

Sedgemore obeyed, and turned the blaze of light full on the key-hole.

“Ah, that’s it! Now I can see plain enough; ‘scritch, scratch, scrinch, sraunch.’ Why h—l

and the d—l!—*this* is not the key; it won't even go in."

"Impossible!" cried Sedgemore; "it *must* go in. I took the impression of the key myself. Here, give it to me!"

But, like the key of the 'Blue Chamber,' it would *not* fit. "Why, why, I can't make it out? There must be some witchcraft about this!" cried Sedgemore, his hair standing on end, and his cheeks perfectly blanched, for failure, or detection are the only things that ever touch a villain's conscience, or his nerves.

"Witchcraft be d——d!—you infernal fool!" thundered Hebblethwaite, who now glared and bellowed like an infuriated bull, as he poured forth a volley of the most horrible imprecations upon the trembling clerk. "Here's a pretty business!" continued he; "there will be another hour lost in my going for the tools, to say nothing of all the mischances that may happen in the meanwhile; for with such a confounded bungler as you, it's not safe to leave the place a minute."

"Perfectly safe, for we'll take care of *it*, and *you*," cried the four policemen, now rushing out upon them, followed by Mr. Phippen and Levens.

"H—l and the d—l! out with the light, Smith," cried Hebblethwaite, making a rush for it, and darkening the lantern he held; and he had

scarcely uttered the words, before the report of a pistol was heard, and a heavy fall and a groan.

"*That* dodge won't do," said Dutton, turning on the light of his own bull's-eye—an example followed by the other three detectives; and no sooner had the light re-appeared than it discovered Sedgemore weltering in his blood, with his head on the floor against the corner of the office-table, where he had fallen, when Hebblethwaite had discharged the pistol at random in the dark, among the policemen as he thought, and was now in the act of pulling another small hair-trigger pistol from his bosom, when Dutton seized his wrists and manacled them—an office that was also performed for Messieurs Smith and Jones, by two of the other officers, while the third raised up Sedgemore."

"So, then," said Hebblethwaite, with a sort of savage doggedness, "you were all prepared for us, seemingly, by having these bracelets ready. There's treachery somewhere. Cowards are generally traitors; so we owe this hospitable reception no doubt to *you*!—you maudlin, dawdling, muling, puling, white-livered weazel," added he, grinding his teeth at the bleeding and groaning Sedgemore, whose wound the policeman was endeavouring to stanch.

"You owe it to that Providence," said Mr. Phippen, which, if it sometimes inscrutably allows villains and villainy to have a fearfully long and

triumphant reign, generally hurls them from their slippery pinnacle of spurious success at the very moment that they are sounding their brazen trumpet for a victory ! Do you happen to know anything of this letter

‘ To Daniel Hebblethwaite, Esq.,
Hummums,
Covent Garden ? ’

“ The d—l ! D—n the letter, and the writer too, for his cursed folly in writing it ! ” growled Hebblethwaite.

“ Don’t you include in your anathema the person to whom it is addressed, for *his* folly in losing it ? ” asked Mr. Phippen, coolly.

“ I tell you what, old boy,” said Hebblethwaite, resuming all his usual stolid effrontery, “ you and I had better come to terms. I have not passed the last thirty-five years of my life between the East and West Indies, and the Mauritius, in large *commercial* transactions, without being *intimately* acquainted with Sir Titaniferous Thompson, and still more intimately *so* with his affairs ; you understand—with his *affairs* ; and it is impossible to be *that* without having secrets worth knowing—secrets in fact, worth several thousands of any man’s money. Now, say the word ; what will *you* give to know them ?

“ Myself the trouble of ascertaining them,” rejoined Mr. Phippen sternly.

“No use, my good Sir ; you might grope about till doomsday, and without a guide ; that is, without Daniel Hebblethwaite for a guide. You will never find the clue to that dark labyrinth. *His* terms are, his own personal liberty, and a free passage to America. What say you, is it a bargain ? *Philip Silwood !* ”

At this name the old man reeled as if *he* also had been shot, and would have fallen, had he not clutched the corner of the table ; but, recovering himself in a moment, he said, as he wiped the big drops from his forehead, “Whoever you are, you bold, bad man, I fear you not. You may indeed among your other crimes desecrate the grave of a long buried secret, and evoke phantoms that curdle memory’s retrospective blood ; but where no guilt is, you cannot conjure up fiends.”

“You do not answer me. Will you buy my secrets at the price I ask ? You had better, for they are dog-cheap.”

“From your appearance, the peculiar circumstances under which I have made your acquaintance, and your own account of your antecedents, I should not care to trust myself alone with you ; and in raking up the cess-pool of Sir Titaniferous Thompson’s life, things which concern his victims may transpire which I have no right to make public.”

“You need not; neither need you be alone with me. The jeweller who furnished me with these ornaments,” said he, (nodding to the policeman, and rattling his handcuffs,) can be present to *protect* you, and need not be the wiser for our conference; as I suppose you speak French at least? And as for my respectability, on *that* score you can have *no doubt*, when I tell you that once upon a time, as the story-books say, I was junior partner in the firm of Ricker, Hebblethwaite, and Ricker, of Manchester, who were solicitors to the late Lord De Baskerville, when, as the Honorable Palmytongue Andover, he canvassed that city, *et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.*”

Again Mr. Phippen groaned. “Levens,” said he faintly, “give me that candle; and you, Sir,” added he sternly to Sedgemore, “quit this place and my service, instantly; you shall be removed to Guy’s Hospital. Try, during your bodily illness, to repent of the far worse wounds you have inflicted on your own soul, and if you die under them, may GOD have mercy upon you. Tom, go for a cab to have him conveyed to the hospital; you need not accompany him, but remain here with Dutton, till I have spoken with this man, and then I shall want you to go with me to the Hummums, to be present at the capture of the chief villain. Now, Sir (to Hebblethwaite), follow me.”

Not till I have your solemn promise, before all here present, that I shall be set at liberty to depart this *very night* for America."

"Yes, on the express proviso that two detectives accompany you to Liverpool, and never leave you, night or day, till you have sailed, and bring me the captain of the vessel's receipt for your passage-money. I know 'The Hiawatha' sails to-morrow night for New York, for I have goods consigned to her; so that will just do." And so saying, he led the way into the dressing-room, taking with him pen, ink and paper, so as to make Hebblethwaite give his depositions in writing. For one full hour were they closeted, Mr. Phippen looking deadly pale, but perfectly calm, when they came back. In the interim Mr. Sedgemore had been removed to Guy's Hospital; but Messieurs Smith and Jones, closely hand-cuffed, were sitting looking like two half-hanged curs, with a policeman standing beside each of them; while they were gazing vacantly, or it might be that they were moralizing, on the pool of their accomplice's blood, in which, like a ghastly pleasantry, the mimic white paper star, and blue paper ribbon were now dabbling.

"Bye bye! sorry for you my dear fellows," said Hebblethwaite, kissing the clumsy tips of his tan-colored, stumpy fingers to them, as he passed out

between two policemen, who held him by each arm. "Sorry for you, *foi de fidéjusseur*, but you see it always has been so, since the world began, and always will be so, till the world is ended—the little are crushed, while the great escape, more especially in *our* line, because vice is the very antipodes of virtue, not only in its nature, but in its results. What I mean is, that *small* virtues, and *great* vices, alone are tolerated in civilized society; and for the same reason—namely, that if either one or the other is *very* great, nobody believes in them. I need not tell you to be *moderate* in virtue, because, with regard to *it*, your temperance amounts to total abstinence; but be *great* in your own peculiar line, and though you may not attain to the highest grade in politics or literature, which is generally the reward of unscrupulous greatness, yet don't despair; for you have every chance of speedily obtaining appointments under government in the colonies, and if so, remember that D. H. stands either for 'Die Hard,' or, for your faithful friend, Daniel Hebblethwaite. Alas! *au revoir* no more; *mais adieu pour toujours!*" And three cabs having been sent for, and two more policemen, Hebblethwaite and his two keepers were rattled off to Euston Square, while Messieurs Smith and Jones, equally well supported, were taken, in the second, to Bow Street; Mr. Phippen, Tom Levens, and

another detective getting into the third, and driving to the "Hummums," while Dutton was left in care of the offices.

"Is Mr. Smith here?" asked Mr. Phippen of a waiter on alighting at the Hummums.

"Which Mr. Smith, Sir?" was the natural reply.

"Why a Mr. Smith, who was to wait here for Mr. Hebblethwaite."

The Hebblethwaite was luckily a land-mark, or otherwise a Smith might not have brought them any nearer to Smithean identity than B., or C., or D. Smith, and so on through the whole alphabet, then recommencing backwards from the Z.

"Oh! yes, Sir; this way if you please, Sir," and the waiter threw open the door of a room in which Sir Titaniferous Thompson was pacing up and down, and announced—

"The gentlemen, Sir."

"My dear Mr. Phippen!" said the baronet, looking as if a thunderbolt had cleft through the ceiling, and fallen at his feet; but, nevertheless, holding out *both* his hands to *welcome* the new arrival, at which Mr. Phippen put both of his hastily behind his back; "this *is* an unexpected pleasure."

"*Very unexpected* I have no doubt; as for the pleasure, I'm sure it will be quite equal to what you will feel at the full and circumstantial written

confession of your *worthy* accomplice, Mr. Daniel Hebblethwaite, now on his way to America. The cogged dice, (here they are, dated, sealed up, and authenticated) by which you cheated Captain Edgerton out of fifty thousand pounds at whist, on the night of the sixteenth of April, eighteen hundred and forty seven, at Calcutta. The three forgeries by which you obtained possession of the title-deeds of Xylon Park, and divers other successful *speculations* too black, and too long, to enumerate now, and which, but for the respect and the mercy I feel for the mother and sister, whom you, from your ill-gotten superfluity, left to starve, should bring you to the gallows, which, from your youth up, you have passed your life in earning; but I have a punishment in store for you, quite commensurate with it, and which, indeed, did you possess a spark of either feeling or conscience, (which you do *not*,) would far exceed it."

"Never!" cried the detected villain, of a livid green with conflicting bad passions—"Never! I have still money—no one need despair who has—and I defy you all!" as he made a rush towards the door; but outside which his further progress was intercepted by Tom Levens and the two policemen, who dragged him forcibly back into the room.

"Unhand me!" he exclaimed, emancipating himself with one desperate struggle from their grasp. "Do you know who I am? I'm a

Member of Parliament!—a Baronet!—an East India Director!—a partner in the Bank of Dobbs, Thompson, and Dobbs!—and the richest commoner in England!—this man accuses me falsely!" But here the mild and truthful habit of St. Stephen's came to his assistance, and, driving down Philip Phippen, with a deep unuttered curse into his heart, he said, in his blandest tone—"I mean, I'm sure my worthy friend, Mr. Phippen, here, has been misled as to my identity."

"Don't presume to call *me* your friend, Sir. Policeman, do your duty, and secure that man."

"One moment, my friends," said Sir Titaniferous, putting up his folded hands, with more parliamentary politeness and forbearance, "one moment; just let me take my hat, which is over on that table, and I will accompany you without force, as Mr. Phippen still persists in his *extraordinary delusion*."

And as there was no door at the other end of the room, they allowed him to go to the table for his hat; but before he had reached it, he drew a phial of prussic acid from his pocket, and put it to his mouth; but quick as lightning, Tom Levens, who had never taken his eyes off him, sprang forward, and dashed it to the ground, where, breaking into a thousand pieces, the room became impregnated with the fumes.

“Officers do your duty ; put on the handcuffs, and let us get out of this.”

“Shall we take *him* to Bow-street, too, Sir?”

“No ; for then, the law *must* take its course, which, for the sake of his poor mother and sister, I do not wish ; but depend upon it, he shall not go unpunished ; neither shall he pollute this country much longer, nor his crimes escape publicity ; for *that* would be bitter injustice. Every shilling of his ill-gotten wealth is now forfeited, therefore, he has no longer house or home ; so I shall keep him, with you to watch him, at my own hotel, till I send him to his proper sphere, a penal colony, from whence I will take good care he never returns.”

The little, miserable-looking tadpole M.P. made no further resistance, for he saw it was useless. So he philosophically began to hug himself with the idea, that where there was life there was hope ; and he actually began sighing, not like Alexander, for new worlds to conquer, but for new worlds to cheat ; and in a colonial world he did not doubt but he should find plenty of congenial spirits, who, upon that very account, it could be a greater glory to exercise his talents upon. Besides, come what might, he *had* been one of the greatest (?) *i. e.* the richest, men in London. He had been married to a Lady Georgiana, the sister of a *çi devant* Prime Minister ; he had an aunt, a *bonâfide* peeress : he had been an M.P., and he still was, and ever would

be, a baronet! and with these, and similar soothing reminiscences, he laid down on a flock-bed, in a small attic that night, at the Blenheim Hotel, watched over by two guardian-angels in blue broad-cloth and glazed hats.

"Tom, said Mr. Phippen, in a mournful voice, and the tears in his eyes, that night after he had made the young man eat a good supper, and the supper-things had been removed, "Tom, your courage and fidelity this day, have rescued many victims, and lightened many hearts. May their grateful prayers rise up to the great and good God, and descend in blessings on your head; and sorry am I, Tom, to hurt, or wound you at such a time; but you *must* know it at last, and what must be told; the sooner it is told the better. That — and yet—'Pon my life — I scarcely know how to send such a poisoned arrow into your heart, neither."

"I think I know what you mean, Sir; that rich bad man up stairs is my poor Janet's brother. She told me this long ago. She said she felt I ought to know it; I loved her the more, when I found I had a sorrow to share with her, for there is no cement for riveting hearts, like a common grief. I shall love her better still, now that I am her refuge from shame; for I shall know that she will not, and cannot desert the heart which is her sanctuary."

“Tom!” said Mr. Phippen, holding out his hand to him, and shaking the young man’s hand cordially, “you *are* a good fellow, I always thought so, and to-day I am convinced of it.”

“I will at all events endeavour to become so, Sir, it would be unpardonable if I did not; having the benefit of a better teacher than precept,—example.”

“Tush, Tom! little merit have we, if we are not parched in the shade. I have kept out of what is called the world, and it is easy to keep the quiet under current of life, in a deep and steady course, unimpeded by storms, which agitate its surface; and the world is *all* surface, Tom, its only depths being whirlpools. Good night; sleep well; God bless you.”

And the old man took up his hand-candlestick, and walked in to his bed-room, which adjoined the sitting-room.



Conclusion.



HERE is now a great *talk* (?) about legislating for women! as even the ass, "the most serious of all animals," as Montaigne calls it, has been legislated for, thanks to Mr. Martin. But it is much to be feared, that redress for women has been delegated to Miss Elizabeth, that well-known female member of the Martin family; and that, according to the usual fate of all reforms consigned to *her* care, we can only not lose sight of the measure, by keeping it *in our eye*. The Persians have a proverb, which they apply, when there is much stir made about a matter, without its producing any visible results: "We hear the mill," say they,

“but we don’t see the corn.” And this Ecclesiastical Amelioration Bill being treated like the little dead hunchback tailor, in the Arabian Nights, and pushed on, and poked down the chimney of one session to that of another, makes one fear that there is less sincerity than policy in this stir; for if the former were the *primum mobile* of the measure, the whole difficulties of the case could be met at once, by a very simple process; that of taking GOD into their councils, and making those marriage vows *stringent*, by which men promise, at GOD’s altar, *to cleave to the one woman they make their wife, in sickness, and in health; till death do them part, forsaking all others!! and endowing her with all their worldly goods!!* instead of giving men a conventional charter to convert, as they now do, these solemn vows into a blasphemous farce, which according to *their* interpretation, means, that *they* have a perfect right (?) to forsake their wife for *all* other women, and however great and abundant their worldly goods may be, to rob her of the little she has of her own, and pinion her down upon the safe, because on the lingering, side of starvation. But then to be sure, if the laws of GOD *began* to be taken into the national councils, and *enforced*, instead of being, as they now are, *one-sided*, heavy fetters for *women*, and mere downy *legal fictions* for *men*, there is no knowing *where* this sort of thing might end. And only imagine what a terrible

state of things it would be, were our Saviour's command obeyed, of "*Let him who is without sin, cast the first stone?*" For how many men in either House of Parliament would, under *such* circumstances be qualified to adjudicate upon divorce cases; more especially, alas! among the legal magnates. And then, precedents are dangerous things, *very*, because PRECEDENTS are the great Reformers of the world; but what courage does it require, to incur for a little posthumous fame, which one cannot know, and would not care about if one did, all the pains and penalties of becoming a precedent. When the senate had permitted the soldiers to elect Galba, and had *confirmed* that election, more emperors were elected abroad in the battle-field by the legions, than in Rome by the senators. And, doubtless, men fear and feel, that were once the laws, in any degree, to be equalized, and made just, towards women, there would be an end of that chartered profligacy, and disgraceful and Draco-like tyranny, which our present barbaric ecclesiastical laws delegate to them, without responsibility or reproach. Still, it is *only* the vicious and the villainous—the cowardly and the crafty, among men, who benefit by this iniquitous state of things, and who clamor for its continuance; good, and moral men *see* its crying injustice, as well as women, and wish it altered, though, of course, they cannot *feel* all its enormities, like the wretched

victims who are writhing under it; but, having the sense to *see* it, they have also the justice to wish it altered, as *they* have nothing to lose, though they *may* have much to gain by its alteration; just as the honest and upright portion of the community, do not care how stringent and penal the laws are made against thieves and house-breakers, for they, *not* being thieves and vagabonds themselves, know that it is to *their* advantage, and to that of the common weal, that such miscreants *should* be *restrained*; and for crime, or rather those capable of committing crime, there is no restraint *but* punishment. As for moral corruption, there is none but *exposure*. Your clever, wary villains, who *have* no *character* to care for, are always mighty tenacious of their "*reputation*," and padlocks and racks, are of course their *chevaux de bataille* for preserving a discreet silence as to their own misdeeds. Naturally, that liberty of speech, of action, and of writing, which was allowed and encouraged under Trajan, of whom nothing *could* be said or written that was *not* to his credit, was carefully forbidden and punished under Nero and Caligula. And, indeed, under the present social (?) and ecclesiastical code of English society, the wonder is, *not* that so *many* men are abandoned profligates, and brutal husbands, but that they are *not all* such, for what between the triumphant success of the vicious, and the

tremendous conventional cant against the murmuring of their victims, *even under the most outrageous and ceaseless wrongs*, it is almost as silly and imprudent for a man to be amiable and virtuous in England, as it would have been for him to be vicious and selfish in Crete or Lacedemon. How is it possible, then, under such a state of things, that we *can* have any Philoxenes?—who, rather than *countenance injustice*, would prefer being carried back to the quarries—aye, even to those hardest of all quarries—mediocrity and neglect! However, till our barbarically disgraceful ecclesiastical laws *are* modified, that line of Martial's should be engraved upon every hymenæal altar throughout Great Britain—

“Si non errasset, fecerat ille minus.”

But we must now return to the personages of our story, and bid them good bye; since, thanks to good Mr. Phippen, they have all happy homes to go to.

It was the fifteenth of July, 1856, and, although St. Swithin's day, one of the finest that ever condescended to travel by an English sky, for the saint had not shed a single tear—why should he? HE was not going to be married! But in the early morning, between ten and eleven, on that day, several carriages might have been seen at the side entrance of St. George's, Hanover Square.

From the first alighted Lord De Baskerville, who handed out his mother, looking solemn and serious as befitted the occasion, and her eyes were red with weeping; but it was not for the loss of her last daughter, but for the loss of that daughter's fortune, which she had so imprudently ingulfed in the whirlpool of her *clever* nephew's *clever* speculations, and had, therefore, been compelled to accede to the very advantageous terms annexed by Mr. Phippen to Florinda's marrying her cousin Harcourt. After his lady-mother had swept majestically into the vestry, Lord De Baskerville would have extended his hand to offer the same assistance to his sister; but there was another hand put forward to do that, belonging to a singularly handsome young man, who had been impatiently waiting at the vestry-door for that especial purpose; and of the many thousand handsome couples that have been made happy or miserable for life within the walls of that fane, certainly a handsomer one never entered it; and so the crowd, assembled outside, by a sudden burst of irrepressible admiration, seemed to testify. The next carriage was a dark beautifully-appointed Brougham, with a pair of perfectly magnificent chestnut horses, from which descended Lord and Lady Aronby, who had been married some three months before, at his whilome quiet little church of Llylisfern, and yet they looked as fond of each

other as if they were now only going to run their heads into the noose. The next carriage that drew up contained Sir Gregory, and Miss Kempenfelt, Linda and Charley; next followed one with Graham, and Palmytongue Andover, and Dr. Ross, succeeded by yet another containing, Florinda's sister and her sposo, now Duke and Duchess of Darmington. And though last, not least, a plain green Clarence, with the Master of the Revels, Phillip Phippen, Janet Chatterton, and Tom Levens.

As Florinda and Harcourt walked up the aisle, he felt her arm tremble slightly within his own, and whispered a little reproachfully—

“Ah! dearest, you tremble; then you have not entire faith in me?”

She replied with a look of ineffable love, not the less convincing for being veiled in tears—

“——— Te montrer que je crains,
C'est te dire assez que je t'aime!”

On reaching the altar, the beautiful young bride made way for the plain and homely-looking matron, who was come there that morning, to evince what Dr. Johnson truly designated the triumph of hope over experience; and all Lady De Baskerville's angry looks, and haughty bridlings, could *not* alter Florinda's kind-hearted courtesy; who, taking the blushing and bashful Janet by the hand,

pressed it, as she, with gentle force made her kneel down before the altar rails, and Lord Aronby (for he it was who performed the ceremony, *unassisted* by anybody, save the contracting parties) soon converted Janet Chatterton into Janet Levens. After which, Florinda and Harcourt were as indissolubly bound together. During the ceremony, the tears of the assistants, as usual, began to flow ; and as usual, from very different causes. Lady De Baskerville's were tears of rage and disappointment to think that Florinda, since she *would* throw herself away upon a half-pay Captain, should add to her absurdity, by insisting upon that odd old Mr. Phippen giving her away, though the man, she must say, *had* behaved very handsomely ; but then, when she had a brother-in-law a duke, and a brother an earl, the thing was preposterous. And then the idea of her making way for that dowdy, common-looking woman, in a bonnet that looked like English satin, of Cranburn Alley manufacture ! What a nuisance that sort of people *are* ; why can they not, as they improve upon everything now-a-days, put some clause in the patent of every title to bar vulgar relations ?

A tear might also have been seen by any scientific gentleman, with a good glass, meandering down Miss Charity's cheek, like a purling stream through the Leasowes, as she looked at the exquisite arrangement of Florinda's veil and orange blos-

soms, and, without making any allowances for the still more exquisite face under them, thought, that she too *might have worn* them just as gracefully, if——

Well, no matter.

As Lady Aronby turned with a sigh, from contemplating the string of orient pearls that adorned the bride's neck, her eyes and those of Sir Gregory Kempenfelt met; they also were suffused with tears, for they both were thinking that graves are strewn with flowers as well as bridals, only that the former *is* a dead sorrow, while the latter is not only a living, but often a life-long sorrow. At length the ceremony was concluded; and Mr. Phippen set the fashion of kissing both the brides, facetiously observing, in the vestry, to each of the bridegrooms, that——

“’Egad ! he was like the Emperor of Russia, for he had only given away what he couldn’t keep.”

And then, after the usual quantum of sighing and signing, and of compliments and congratulations, the *cortége* repaired to Mr. Phippen’s new house, in Upper Brook Street, to breakfast, where they found many additions to their party; and among them, Lord Pendarvis, and Robert Chatterton, who had doffed his petticoats for that happy occasion, and looked as rigidly stiff and glossy, as a suit of painfully new clothes could

make him; while officiating in the cloak-room, was Sarah Nash, in a lavender silk dress and a cap of Honiton lace, with avalanches of white ribbons about it, while Tim, her faithful Tim! wore *his* favours in a collar of little rosettes about his neck, which as Charley observed—who himself wore a favour as big as a cauliflower—“made a most *bootiful* contrast to his glossy black satin coat.”

In the drawing-room was seated old Mrs. Thompson, in an easy chair, dressed in a plain grey silk gown, with a clear lawn handkerchief pinned over the shoulders, a white cap, black mittens, and in her hand a thick crutch-stick cane, with an agate handle, over which her palsied head and plain uncurled grey hair was shaking; and yet, this poor withered crone was only four years older than her blooming buxom peeress sister. Such a hard slave-driver is poverty, whose bonds are drawn on human flesh, and whose indentures are written and signed with human blood!

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said Mr. Phippen, standing at a table which was covered with papers and parchments, where was also seated a lawyer writing; “before we go down to breakfast, I have a few words to say, and a few matters to settle. In the first place, I must inform you, that through the zeal, sagacity, and fidelity of my good friend, Mr. Levens, here, Sir Titaniferous Thompson’s

crowning frauds were prevented ; by which means I have been happily able to detect several of his *former* ones, and, better still, to make restitution to his victims in many instances, though not in all ; and none has given me greater pleasure than to refund to you, Sir Gregory Kempenfelt, the monies which, by a most wicked plot, he swindled a relative of yours out of. Sir Titaniferous Thompson stand forth, and confirm the truth of all I am about to assert !" And here, handcuffed, and in the custody of the two policemen, the miserable and mean-looking *çi devant* millionaire was dragged in from an adjacent room amid the sobs of his mother and sister, and a look of withering scorn from his fine lady aunt, while *he* neither looked to the right nor to the left, but kept his eyes on the ground, and his nose in the air, save when the lawyer handed him a pen to append his signature to the written statements which Mr. Phippen read out. "Lady Florinda Penrhyn's fortune of £20,000 was, I grieve to say, irrevocably gone," said he "before the remains of the wreck got into my hands ; was it not so, Sir ? Here, sign quickly, for you are not Cardinal De Beaufort, and *must* make many signs before *you* die. But in order that Lady Florinda, so good and so young, should *not* suffer for the hoary iniquity of others—that stale injustice which the world has so long been reeling under—I beg to present her with

this house, and £50,000." (Lady de Baskerville stared, and fairly started ! for though she had understood that Mr. Phippen was to provide handsomely for Harcourt, she had no idea of the manner, or extent of that provision ; but the young people who had known all about it three weeks before, now only renewed their looks, and tears of gratitude.) "But" continued Mr. Phippen, "as prevention is even better than cure, both the house and the money are strictly secured to Lady Florinda, for although I think my gallant young friend, Captain Penrhyn, has given his country too many proofs of *true* courage, ever to be guilty of the dastardly cowardice of crushing and ill-using a woman, *because* that woman happens to be his *wife*, and he is, therefore, *legally entitled to do so*, yet, till our present iniquitous laws for the pulverization of woman are altered, *if they ever are* (?) I do not think men ought to have such crooked temptation put in their way ; and I have the less scruple in putting everything in Lady Florinda's power, that I am very certain that *no* woman would ever let even the worst and most brutal husband want money ; whereas it is very dubious if even the best men do not think that women have, or *ought* to have, the art of living upon nothing, which is, I suppose, to keep the unities with the *other privileges* they allow them. And

now, Levens, to settle my accounts with *you*, *I owe you* a separate debt of gratitude, and, therefore, give you five hundred pounds a year for yourself, and a house, which I have bought for you at Richmond; but your wife must still retain, as her own, that which she had before she married you; but the house is an encumbered estate, for, unless you and Janet decidedly object, 'Gad! I, and Sarah Nash, and Tim mean to come and live with you, for I begin to be tired of tossing about the world."

"Oh! Sir, *now* you have indeed made us happy—happier than by all your other generosity," wept the grateful pair, almost simultaneously.

"Glad of it, for that's what I wish to do. And now, Sir," added Mr. Phippen, turning to the contemptible-looking culprit, "I have a word to say to you, before you are sent for ever out of a country you have disgraced; however, we won't quite hide our diminished heads *yet*, for if our monetary annals bring us such plague-spots as Titaniferous Thompsons, John Sadleirs, and Dean Pauls, our military ones counterbalance these foul corruptions, by Williamses, other Thompsons, Windhams, Lakes, and Tisdales, god-like heroes of Kars and Sevastopol, and whole legions of Scipios and Leonidas of which Dunham Massys and Harcourt Penrhyns are the *locum tenens*. But *you*, poor, miserable, bad man—and all bad men

are miserable even at the pinnacle of their rickety success—of *you*, it may be truly said—

‘The boy *was* father to the man.’

You began by robbing your own mother, to meet your juvenile peculations and speculations; and you ended, by leaving her to starve when Satan had filled your coffers to overflowing. But *you* were a rich man, no matter *how* your riches had been acquired, and therefore the world courted and upheld you; *she* was a poor but honest woman, therefore her relations deserted, and left her to struggle as she could, or to perish as she might. By the merest chance, I met with your poor, struggling, meritorious sister; I say chance, *that* being the accepted term for such events; but what we call chances are but the arrows of GOD’S providence, aimed by His unerring hand into the targets of human destinies. Willing to try if you had still one touch of nature, or one spark of human feeling, one day that you came to my office I had purposely left a box in the passage, directed to your mother; true the name is a common one, but *she* had an uncommon son, and so no question did he ask me as to whom that box might be for, or whither it was going. *Now* you are once more a single man without incumbrances, for your lady-wife has returned to her relations, and I cannot say that I pity her for the loss of the money she

married, or for being tied, for the rest of her days, to the dirty little sow's-ear purse that money was in. Nothing further now remains for me to do, but to give you, previous to your being conveyed to St. Catherine's Dock, where the vessel is, which will take you to Melbourne, all that remains of your vast possessions—namely, these three forgeries on the late partners of the firm Silwood and Adams, this sheaf of shares in the Grand Duchy of Swillandsmokem lead mines, and these loaded dice, furnished to you by your *worthy* friend and long associate, Daniel Hebblethwaite. Robert Chatterton, the lesson is a severe but I hope it will be a salutary one; look well at this man that you may, all your life, remember *what a detected villain looks like*, and in remembering it, never forget the trite but great truth which your copy-book tells you—namely, that—

Honesty *is* the best policy.

And whenever you feel tempted to do what is not *quite* fair, or to take any advantage of your school-fellows, or, in after life, of any one else, think of YOUR UNCLE, born in a humble but respectable sphere of life, raised by greed of gain above that sphere, and ultimately hurled, by merited disgrace, *far below it*. Now, officers, remove your prisoner from our sight.

As they were preparing to do so, his poor old mother tottered forward, and said—

“Son! for alas! you *are*, with all your crimes, still my son—oh! repent before it is too late; if it is only in gratitude to GOD that you have not stood in a felon’s dock *this* day.”

“Come, come, old woman, there’s no use in your shaking your head at me *now*,” said the wretch.

“I don’t shake my head at you, Titan,” said the poor creature, “it’s palsy that shakes it before its time, from the way, since the hour you were born, that you have wrung my heart.”

But here Janet put her arm round her mother’s waist, and drew her away, as poor Anne Thompson sobbed out, “GOD forgive you! GOD turn your heart at last, Titan.”

And as the door closed upon him and the two policemen, Philip Phippen turned towards Lady De Baskerville, and looking her steadily in the face for a few seconds, with a mingled expression of sorrow and contempt, he said in a slow, but clear voice, as he drooped his head slightly forward, with his hands crossed one over the other—

“And now, Madam, *you* shall be satisfied; for I see you are asking yourself *who* and what on earth is this odd old man that takes upon him to settle every body’s affairs, and even to interfere with the course of justice? *Who* he is, you shall know; but they say it is difficult to know oneself; therefore, *what* he is I may not find it so easy to tell you.

One part of my history—a trifling episode it is true—I already told you, one day when I had the honour of sitting next you at dinner, at your *nephew's* house, I mean the little circumstance of my having had *my all* wrecked early in life. You asked me the name of the vessel? I told you it was the Lady De Baskerville, at least, *so* it was called, after that lady, but when *my all* went down, she was called the Dora Penrhyn.” Lady De Baskerville changed from red to white, and gasped for air, as every eye, including those of her own children, were turned upon her. “The way of it was this, Madam. My name was not always Philip Phippen, neither. In my young days I was called Philip Silwood; I was the eldest son of the largest mill-owner, in Manchester, and was thought *there* a great match; Dora Penrhyn had nothing but a beautiful face, *literally nothing but that*. For a long time my parents objected to the marriage on that account; but nothing, at least nothing *they* could do, could turn me from it, for she had my heart, and I fear, had she wanted my soul, she would have had it too; and—and—fool that I was, I thought that she loved me, for she had told me so, so often. But one evening—it was an evening in May, I have reason to remember it—she met me in a meadow by the river-side; she seemed confused; she asked me to gather for her a branch of May? as I did so, a thorn ran into my finger—that was

nothing; and yet, sometimes I fancy I feel it still; well, the sun was setting, the river was very calm, and so was her face, and with that calm face she told me that all was over—that *that* was the last time she could meet me; that *her friends* insisted upon her marrying a much finer gentleman, even the member for Manchester. I was such a thick-headed fool that I could *not* believe it, but she wrote it all to me the next day, and sent me back all my letters, and my picture; *still* I lingered on, like a person walking in a dream, till one morning oh!—how it rained, but *I* did not shed a tear—I was awoke from my dream by the ringing of marriage-bells. They were hers! *then* I knew that I had nothing more to do there; I got my father to give me my portion; I went away, I neither knew, nor cared where, but I travelled, and at length I again found myself at Paris, where I had been as a very young man. I picked up one or two sensible ideas there, upon which I have traded ever since; at last I returned—but *not* to Manchester—I've never seen it since—nor never will. I commenced business as a stock-broker in London, changing a name that was odious to me, and took that of Phippen, which had been my mother's; but I did so by royal assent, or else my business transactions would not have been valid. As riches increased, I did not exactly set my heart upon them, but I tried to set

my heart by them; for I soon found out that removing other people's miseries is the very best way of lightening one's own. I had no personal expenses, no hobbies but *that one*, and it's astonishing how far money goes in this sort of looking after one's fellow-creatures a little; and it was in this pursuit of 'the Miseries of Human Life' that I got into the habit of going into cheap suburban lodgings; for I soon found, by experience, that the heaviest hearts are not always those to be found in hospitals and alms-houses, nor even begging about the streets. And now, Madam, I have only to restore to you *that*, on which you set so much value, and I, none at all" concluded he, presenting Lady De Baskerville her diamonds, with a low bow, amid the stifled sobs of all present, including those of that lady.

And here breakfast was announced, when the weeping Florinda, quitting Harcourt's arm, passed her hand through the good old man's, who had made them all so happy, saying—

"I am determined, *dear* Mr. Phippen, that I will *not* give you up to any one."

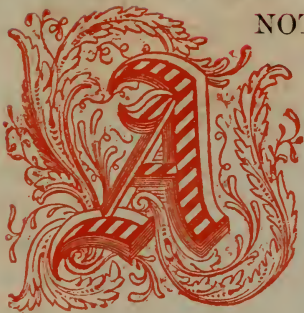
"Well, then, it's a bargain" said the old man, resuming his merry laugh as they all went down stairs; "and though your mother would not have me for a husband, from this out I'm to be my pretty Florinda's father; and 'egad! I begin to think, that *this* is better than the original plan. So

as 'All's well that ends well,' you see, my dear little girl, poor Philip Silwood has lived to exchange his broken heart for a sound head, and to thank God that his first and last love-suit was *not*

VERY SUCCESSFUL."



L'Envoi.



ANOTHER year had passed.

It was once more the fair sweet month of May, and a large party were staying at Baron's Court, including Mr. Phippen and Lord and Lady Aronby; when, just as the sun was setting, and casting its long golden shadows on all around, two persons entered the little old village churchyard and walked to a quiet grave under the patriarchal yew trees. They were

Harcourt Penrhyn and his mother. She had religiously kept poor May's secret from all, save the one heart from whom hers had no secrets, but most of all had she kept it from her son. Yet now, as their lengthening shadows fell upon that fresh narrow grave, they seemed to repose side by side upon it, and the tears streamed down Mary's cheeks.

"Ah! Harcourt," said she, "you know not what a gentle loving heart lies *there*."

"Not *there*, Mother," he rejoined, pointing upwards.

"True; here," added she; "plant this branch of her sweet name-sake flower on that green pillow at her head, and when I, too, shall have passed away, Harcourt, *promise me*, that till you rejoin us, you will, every year, if in England, come and watch this branch, till it becomes a tree."

"Mother," said he, his own eyes filling with tears, as he folded her in his arms, "from this out, I'll not only watch it and water it, but every year I'll almost count its every leaf, for now you have invested it with a life-long interest for me." And both mother and son consecrated the little branch they had just planted, by kneeling down and praying, that when they also should have gone to their Eternal Home, they might inhabit the same mansion as she who now slept within that twice hallowed grave.

“ So earth below and heaven above,
 With things we oft have seen before,
 But scarce had thought to look on more,
 Still wait to meet our love.

And in all change of time and place
 A something still is left behind,
 Which, lingering last upon the mind,
 No changes can efface.”*

* From a charming little volume of Poems called “ Poetical Tentatives,”
 by Lynn Erith. Saunders and Otley, London, 1854.

FINIS.



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